



THE BLUEBIRD

Evansville Audubon Society Newsletter

www.evvaudubon.org

Volume 54 Number 3, May-June 2024, Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve, 551 N Boeke Rd. Evansville, IN 47711

CHASING MELODY – Indiana Wood Thrush Conservation Project

Evansville Audubon Society is a ‘Forest Steward’ sponsor of the Chasing Melody Project collaborative initiative between Indiana Audubon, Indiana DNR, and global partners. Our Evansville Audubon members made this sponsorship possible through their conservation grant donations!

The **Wood Thrush** (*Hylocichla mustelina*), with its beautiful flute song, is a charismatic and migratory thrush that nests throughout the Midwest and Eastern U.S. Their melodious song, often described as a flute-like series of ethereal notes, fills the woodland air with a sense of enchantment.

Despite its well-known song and annual migration, much is unknown about population movement and conservation needs across the annual cycle of this beautiful bird. Steep declines in the last 50 years have put the Wood Thrush on the USFWS’ Birds of Conservation Concern list. Nearly 4% of the entire species nests in Indiana. In a first of its kind program, Indiana Audubon and the Indiana DNR are partnering with international partners in the first full scale, lifecycle tracking project of Wood Thrushes from every part of their range, both summering and wintering grounds.



This project will link a joint international effort to deploy Motus radio tracking tags on upwards of 600 Wood Thrush between 2024-2025 in breeding states, as well as six nonbreeding countries in Latin America (Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica). Data gathered will assist managers in targeting habitat management along migratory pathways and allow us to learn which corridors to add for management protection. This dataset will allow for strengthened partnerships between North American and Latin American conservation partners.

In Indiana, sponsors such as Evansville Audubon will provide funding for the costs of Motus tags, tag training, and deployment of tags statewide at various locations that host Motus towers in the state. Evansville Audubon members’ support helps us learn more about where our Wood Thrushes migrate and spend the winters, which allows us to focus our conservation spending to where it helps the birds the most!

PROGRAMS

Programs are on the third Tuesday of every other month at Wesselman Woods Nature Center at 6 PM (central time) and are free and open to the public. Any last minute changes will be posted on our Facebook page, Website, and via email.

May 21, 2024 -- "Birds and Transmission" presented by Wendy Bredhold, Sr. Mgr. Transmission Initiative - National Audubon Climate. She will talk about the National Audubon Society's bold new transmission initiative and Audubon's work to build the electrical grid birds need.

June 18, 2024 -- Join us for our Annual Potluck and Meeting. Please bring a covered dish to share, your favorite beverage, and your own table service (disposable table service and lemonade will also be available). A brief annual meeting to elect incoming officers and directors will follow the potluck.

SAVE THESE DATES

The Ohio Valley Birding Festival is scheduled **April 26 - 28, 2024**.

For information, contact LD Harry at ldharry007@gmail.com.

FIELD TRIPS:

Friday, April 26 Migration Walk in conjunction with Ohio Valley Birding Festival. Meet at Howell Wetlands at 5 PM. Accompany us on a search for early spring migrants during a walk through this restored wetland park on Evansville's west side.

Saturday, May 4 Warbler Migration Walk Finale!

Join Evansville Audubon for a Warbler Madness hike at Harmonie State Park to look for warblers and other migratory birds with John Meridig. We will meet up at the state park pool parking lot at 6:15 AM.

For more information, contact Bob Meier, Audubon Field Trips, birderbob68@yahoo.com

HAPPENINGS on the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge

April 26, 2024 - Birding hike at Boyd Woods at 7 AM. This is an Ohio Valley Birding Festival event.

May 18, 2024 - Odonata (damselflies & dragonflies) of the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge program presentation by Don Batema at 10 AM Central Time at the Oakland City Library. See article elsewhere in this newsletter.

June 15, 2024 - Least Terns program coordinated by Liz Haig. Meet at Cane Ridge WMA. Details TBA.

Additional details can be found at the patokarefugefriends.org/happenings website and Friends of the Patoka River NWR Facebook page as they become available.

REMINDER! Final spring 2024 programs for **FAMILIES OF A FEATHER - Birding for Beginners** will be at Wesselman Woods on April 27 and May 25. These programs are made possible by the **Lewis Memorial Fund & Evansville Audubon Society**.

The Families of Feather interactive programs give children ages 8+ and their guardians (adult guardians must be present) the essential skills and knowledge needed to become confident birdwatchers and at-home conservationists. [Register online at: wesselmanwoods.org/featherfam](https://wesselmanwoods.org/featherfam)

PROGRAM TOPICS:

April 27 - Migration. Each year, many species of birds make heroic journeys to find more resources as the seasons change. Find out more about the obstacles in their way.

May 25 - Bird Anatomy & Library Day. Attendees will learn how to identify different parts of birds and how to ID birds in their backyard. EVPL joins in with additional activities!

JOIN THE GLOBAL BIG DAY EFFORTS - Cornelllab GLOBAL BIG DAY May 11, 2024

Be part of the world's largest birding event! Global Big Day, happening on Saturday, May 11, celebrates birds worldwide. Whether you're at home or outdoors, contribute to this global effort by sharing your Indiana bird sightings with eBird.

Participating is simple. Spend just 5 or 10 minutes observing birds and report your sightings online or through the eBird Mobile app. For more extensive birding, submit multiple checklists throughout the day. Your observations help scientists better understand global bird populations and contribute to groundbreaking research.

Last year, Global Big Day gathered an unprecedented 3.2 million bird observations, thanks to the participation of over 58,000 individuals worldwide. In Indiana alone, birders like you contributed to recording 233 species, submitting a total of 2,009 complete checklists.

To participate, go birding on May 11 and submit your sightings to eBird before May 14 to be included in the initial results announcement. Your data can make a difference in bird conservation!

Help Indiana surpass last year's count! Get details at ebird.org/globalbigday.

Odonata of the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge and Management Area

Donald Batema - May 18, 2024 10:00 AM Central Time Oakland City Public Library

The Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge and Management Area represents one of the largest bottomland hardwood ecosystems in southern Indiana, with meandering oxbows, marshes, ponds, managed moist-soil units, and constructed wetlands that provide diverse and suitable habitat for a wide range of wildlife. An important group of organisms that inhabit these wetland areas are the Odonata, namely damselflies and dragonflies. Odonata play vital roles as predators and prey, are important



bioindicators of ecosystem health, and are of conservation concern in wetland and aquatic habitats. Because the Odonata of the Refuge were previously poorly understood, a study was conducted to document what species occur on the Refuge, with an emphasis on locating rare, threatened, and endangered species. Additionally, it was the purpose of this study to generate educational outcomes that could be used by refuge personnel to highlight the importance of Odonata to the general public

SLATE OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS CANDIDATES FOR THE ANNUAL ELECTION, JUNE 18,2024

The following slate of four officers for one-year terms and the two directors for three-year terms ending 2027 will be submitted for a vote at the June annual members meeting election:

President - Sue Vernier

Vice-President - Niles Rosenquist

Treasurer - Richard Vernier

Secretary - Brian Taylor

Directors - term ending 2027

Pam Kimsey

Hope Hartmann

The Directors for terms ending 2025 and 2026 are not up for election but listed for your information:

Directors - term ending 2025

Phil Copp

Pat Copp

Jim Kimsey

Jacob Scheller

Directors - term ending 2026

Eric Howard

Jeremy Ross

The Nominations Committee continues to encourage anyone who can devote a couple of hours for each of our 5 board meetings every other month Sept. through May (June is the annual election and potluck) to seriously consider being a Director! We still have vacancies for terms ending 2026 and 2027. Please contact Brian Taylor, brian.taylor@par.consulting, or Sue Vernier, rsavcaver2@gmail.com, and they will be happy to answer any questions regarding job description, duties, etc.

PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENTS NOTIFICATION

The following Bylaws Amendments will be presented for a vote at the June 18, 2024, annual members meeting (following the potluck). The proposed changes will change the required number of Directors from a fixed number of 12 to a flexible range of a minimum of 4 to maximum of 12 to enable the Governing Board (Officers and Directors) to meet quorum requirements to conduct the business necessary to continue as an effective chapter of National Audubon. (This is more in line with what other 501(c)(3) tax exempt organizations of similar size have in their Bylaws structure.)

ARTICLE IV - BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS, Section 1: The business of the Society shall be administered by a Governing Board of not less than four (4) nor more than twelve (12) Directors and the Officers [replaces 'of twelve Directors and the Officers' in the existing bylaws], directly elected from the Society's membership and by the membership. Each Director and Officer shall have one vote.

Section 2: Each year at the annual meeting up to four Directors [replaces 'at the annual meeting four Directors'] shall be elected for a term of three years. This shall stagger the terms of the total number of Directors [replaces total twelve Directors].

Evansville Audubon Society Minutes March 19, 2024

Program: at 6:00 PM – “Natives and You” by Donnarae of Ancient Roots Native Nursery

Business Meeting convened at 7:15, No quorum, six board members present, no votes planned

Minutes: January 2024 meeting minutes approved

Treasurer's report, February 2024, (distributed by email):

Income of \$320.62 includes a \$100 OVBF donation, \$205 donations from appeal letter, \$15.59 bulk mail refund, and .03 interest.

Expenses of \$1,194.27 includes \$294.27 Lewis Memorial money to Wesselman Woods, \$100 to JJ Audubon S.P. for OVBF, and an \$800 education grant to Susan Fowler.

Current checking balance is \$7,083.59.

Checking amount without the reserve account balances is \$3,391.70.

Committee Reports:

Field Trips

a) March 29-Migration walk at Howell Wetlands. 5pm April 19-Migration walk at Burdette Park. 5pm

b) April 26-Migration walk in conjunction with OVBF at Howell Wetlands. 5pm

c) And the season finale! May 4-Warbler Madness at Harmonie SP with John Meridig. We will meet up at the pool parking lot at 6:30am

The Ohio River Birding Festival brochure has been published

Programs- May 21, 2024 , Wendy Bredhold, Senior Manager for the National Audubon Society's Transmission Initiative to build out a bird friendly electric grid to support the transition to clean energy.

Junior Birders- no activity scheduled, however the “Families of a Feather”, supported by the Lewis grant program at Wesselman, is proceeding well.

Conservation- Updates on the outcome of the state legislature session, the CenterPoint rate case hearing, proposed Alcoa/Boonville coal mine permit application and the proposed dog park on city park land.

Education and Conservation Grants- No new applications received.

Events – Amanda Joest will be representing Evansville Audubon at the Wesselman Woods Earth Day event on April 20. Susan Fowler will represent Audubon at the University of Evansville Earth Day event.

Media/Marketing- No update

Old Business :

1) We still need to fill the President vacancy and director positions. Currently:

Officers:

President – VACANCY (outgoing president is term limited). Proposed Sue Vernier

Vice-President – Richard Vernier. Proposed Niles Rosenquist

Treasurer – Sue Vernier. Proposed Richard Vernier

Secretary – VACANCY (outgoing secretary is term limited) . Proposed Brian Taylor

Directors, term ending 2025:

Phil Copp

Pat Copp

Jim Kimsey

Jacob Scheller

Directors, term ending 2026:

Eric Howard

Jeremy Ross

VACANCY

VACANCY

Directors, term ending 2027:

Pam Kimsey

VACANCY. Proposed Hope Hartmann

VACANCY

VACANCY

Committee Chairs:

Programs – VACANCY

Jr. Birders – VACANCY

New Business:

1) Our bylaws presently require us to maintain 12 Directors and 4 Officers, but that was set up years ago when we had a larger National Audubon membership. We could consider reducing the number of directors from the present 12 to requiring 8 directors. We actually have 8 people serving or willing to serve as directors. A bylaws change requires a two-thirds vote of the members present at the annual meeting, provided all members shall have been notified in writing of the proposed amendment(s) five days prior to the meeting. That means we could propose the bylaws change at the May meeting and then vote on it at the June meeting.

Items from the floor: none

Bird observations: Cormorants, Sapsuckers, nuthatches, prairie warbler, fish crows, short eared owl were all mentioned.

Meeting adjourned at about 8:00

Submitted by Niles Rosenquist, Secretary

Evansville Audubon Society
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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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www.facebook.com/evvaudubon

To receive newsletters & notices of EAS activities:
Go to our website at <https://www.evvaudubon.org>
and sign up at the bottom of the page, or send your email address to
info@evvaudubon.org

Not an Evansville Audubon Society member? Join now and become a member of the National Audubon Society as well. **Current members** may renew directly with National Audubon Society at www.audubon.org.

Chapter Code H03

___ \$20 minimum membership includes one year of the award-winning Audubon magazine

___ My check enclosed made payable to:
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
Mail to:
Sue Vernier, EAS Treasurer
580 N 350 E
Princeton, IN 47670

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email (to Receive Newsletters & Notices of EAS Activities):
