



THE BLUEBIRD

Evansville Audubon Society Newsletter

www.evvaudubon.org

Volume 54 Number 2, March-April 2024, Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve, 551 N Boeke Rd. Evansville, IN 47711

Excerpts From Evansville Audubon's Chapter Report to National Audubon

Many of our membership may be unaware that chapters of National Audubon must file annual reports. The report is quite detailed and covers nearly a dozen categories. It may surprise you what our small chapter has managed to accomplish with just a handful of unpaid volunteers!! Below are just a few of our accomplishments from the report:

Partners – Our chapter collaborates with organizations and individuals as part of our education and conservation work, including community engagement and policy advocacy. The list ranges from public agencies (Hovey Lake FWA, Patoka River NWR, JJ Audubon S. P., Mesker Park Zoo & Botanic Gardens, Tekoppel Elementary School); private community engagement and science partners (Wesselman Woods, Patchwork Central, Sycamore Land Trust, Indiana Audubon Society); and private individuals (BSA Eagle Scout and Susan Fowler, storytelling artist and scientist).

National Audubon's Gregorinah Hartman, Director, Network Action & Leadership Development, was impressed enough by our chapter report to write: *“I just read through your report and WELL DONE! It looks great. I am truly floored by the sheer number of partnerships your chapter maintains – almost 20! That's incredible. You all are clearly keystones in your community.”*

Activities – Our myriad activities ranged from programs, board meetings, field trips, Christmas Bird Counts, Jr. Birders, outreach events (Mesker Zoo Earth Day celebration), social event (annual potluck), education and conservation grants, advocacy, Ohio Valley Birding Festival, and birding classes (Families of a Feather – Wesselman Woods).

Goals and Priorities – Last year we started our “Events Committee” with the goal to provide outreach to the public at area events. Our display at Mesker Zoo's 'Party for the Planet' Earth Day celebration featured birdy games for kids and QR codes on displays to reduce use of disposable items. This year we plan to be at Wesselman Woods Earth Day event. Our website was overhauled to give it a fresh appearance and hopefully attract potential new members. *One of this year's goals is to successfully fill all open positions for officers, directors and committee chairs in order to continue these important activities that our membership expects!*

This is where you come in, please review the report from the Nominations Committee inside this newsletter and volunteer!! Many hands make light work.

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.

March 19, 2024 -- "Natives and You" presented by Donnarae of Ancient Roots Native Nursery. A program on planting native.

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 UPDATE:

We had 14 people attend Evansville Audubon's annual Kentucky Dams Land Between the Lakes trip Feb. 3.

The highlights were 10 waterfowl species, 5 gull species, and 6 birds of prey species. Stay tuned for our upcoming spring outings which will be listed on our Evansville Audubon Society Facebook page, www.facebook.com/evvaudubon.

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

HAPPENINGS on the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge

March 2, 2024 (Rain date March 9) Peent! An evening with the Woodcocks at Columbia Mine Preserve at 5:30 PM.

April 6, 2024 Wabash and Erie Canal walk and talk at the McCandless Tract on the Refuge. Meet at the Dongola Kiosk at 9 AM.

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

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



Loggerhead Shrike | Ryan Sanderson

Protect Endangered Birds with Your Tax Return

Donate to the Nongame Wildlife Fund on your taxes to safeguard species such as the **Loggerhead Shrike and Barn Owl**, while also securing federal matching funds.

THANK YOU!

To those who have donated to our fundraising campaign since our last newsletter:
Jim Elsner, Kate Lynch, William McCoy, Marietta Smith, Maureen Shepherd, Rev. Robert and JoAnne Reinhardt.

Remember, if you have not yet contributed, it's never too late! Just make your checks payable to Evansville Audubon Society and mail your donation to Evansville Audubon Society, 551 N. Boeke Rd., Evansville, IN 47711.

Families of a Feather

Birding for Beginners

presented by Wesselman Woods and the
Evansville Audubon Society



**FREE
PROGRAM!**

Families of A Feather is an engaging, educational program designed specifically for families who are curious about the fascinating world of birds.

This FREE interactive program takes children age 8+ and their guardians* on a flight into the birding realm, equipping them with the essential skills and knowledge needed to become confident birdwatchers and at-home conservationists.

Spring 2024	Topics (10-11 AM CST)
FEB 24	Bird Groups: Backyard Birds & Raptors
MAR 30	Survival of the Smallest
APR 27	Migration
MAY 25	Bird Anatomy & Library Day

Learn more and register online at:
wesselmanwoods.org/featherfam

About the Topics

Bird Groups: Backyard Birds & Raptors - Learn about the differences between these two bird groups and meet some of the resident raptors of Wesselman Woods!

Survival of the Smallest - Small birds pack a lot of energy into their tiny bodies. Learn about what it takes for little birds to survive in this big world.

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.

Bird Anatomy & Library Day - Not all birds are created equal! Learn how to identify different parts of birds and how to ID birds in your backyard. EVPL joins us on this journey of discovery with additional activities!

**Adult guardians must be present*

this program is made possible by the
Lewis Memorial Fund & Evansville Audubon Society



Donnaræ Woolston has always been a nature lover, exploring and admiring the life that grew around her. She began to reclaim her own land and woods when she learned how imperative native plants are to the ecosystem that supports wildlife and human health.

Native plants have become her passion. Donnaræ, with the support of her husband Daniel, opened a native-only plant nursery, Ancient Roots Native Nursery, LLC. Their mission is to provide access to native plants and share their knowledge of the importance of planting native.

Drawing Audubon-style

2:45 P.M.—Audubon Museum, Friends of Audubon Meeting Room; Approx. 45 mins.-1 hr. For ages 10+; no art skills needed. Spaces limited, pre-registration recommended. Fee: \$5.00

John James Audubon, famed artist, naturalist, and ornithologist, made it his life's work to artistically capture each bird species in his paintings. He did so in a unique and fascinating way. Join artist, Savannah Hoskinson, as she leads you step-by-step, through Audubon's method for drawing birds. You, too, will soon have an appreciation for the finer details of our feathered friends, in a keepsake to take home.

Sunday, April 28

Eagle Slough Natural Area Birding Hike

7:00 A.M.—Meet at the Eagle Slough entrance on Waterworks Rd., just north of Ellis Park; Approx. 2 hrs.

This local urban wetland was recently returned to its natural state. Join us for an early morning birding walk through this 127-acre property. Expect to see a variety of warblers, migratory songbirds, and late shorebirds, including Wood Ducks, Winter Wrens, vireos, thrushes,

tanagers, and more. If you have binoculars, bring them along!

Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve—Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Sanctioned Hike

1:00 P.M.—Meets inside the Nature Center; WNNP is at the back of Wesselman Park, 551 N. Boeke Rd., Evansville, IN; Approx. 1 hr.

This old-growth forest sanctuary boasts many year-round bird species and provides unprecedented stopover habitat for neo-tropical migrants passing through the area.

For future events, check out the **Evansville**

Audubon Society website:

<https://evvaudubon.org/field-trips>.

For information about the local **Wild Birds Unlimited Nature Shop**, visit their website at:

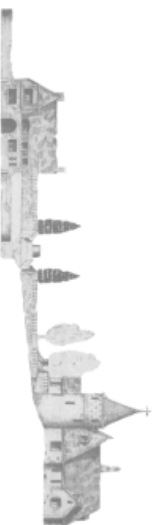
<https://evansville.wbu.com>.

More details about **Ancient Roots Native Nursery** can be found at:

<https://ancientrootnativenursery.com/>.

For news and events at **Wesselman Woods**, go to: <https://wesselmanwoods.org>.

Kentucky State Parks information and calendar of events is at: <https://parks.ky.gov>.



The John James Audubon Museum houses one of the world's largest collections of original artwork and artifacts of America's first great artist—**John James Audubon**—who was both a naturalist and

an ornithologist.

Museum: (502)782-7918. Find us on Facebook and Instagram.



2024 Schedule of Events

Information can be found at:

evvaudubon.org & parks.ky.gov.

Activities are **FREE**, unless otherwise stated!

Friday, April 26

Patoka River NWR Birding Hike
7 A.M.—Meets at Boyd Woods, Oakland City, IN

Approx. 2-3 hrs.; Sturdy shoes are recommended.



Join us for a birding walk through Boyd Woods in search of warblers and other migratory songbirds. We'll continue the hike past Snakey Point Marsh for possible views of waterfowl and marsh birds, and end at a little-visited portion of Columbia Mine Preserve to look for grassland sparrows.

Directions: East on SR 64 out of Oakland City 1 mile from SR 357 (Main) to CR 1275E (look for Refuge sign). Turn left and follow signs to Snakey Point Marsh and continue on to parking lot on left at Boyd Woods (Maxey Marsh on the right).



John James Audubon State Park

3100 US Hwy 41 North, Henderson, KY • (270) 826-2247 • parks.ky.gov

Howell Wetlands Birding Hike

5 P.M.--Meets at Howell Wetlands parking lot at 1400 Tekoppel Ave, Evansville, IN; Approx. 2 hrs.



Accompany us on a search for early spring migrants during a walk through this restored wetland park on Evansville's west side. If you have binoculars, bring them along.

Saturday, April 27

Birding at Audubon Wetlands*

7 A.M. --Meets at Audubon Wetlands, across from 790 Wolf Hills Road, Henderson, KY. Approx. 2 hrs.; Wear shoes for marshy conditions.

A wetland property acquisition essentially doubles the size of Audubon State Park. Help us identify this bottomland forest's bird guests. This property has an active Bald Eagle nest.

This hike is dependent upon Ohio River flood stages. If water levels at Evansville surpass 32 ft., please meet at Audubon Park Museum for an alternative hike.

Audubon's Bird Migration Walk*

9 A.M. --Meets at Audubon Museum, John James Audubon State Park; Approx. 1.5 hrs.

The park's Beech-Maple forest is an urban oasis for woodland songbirds and shorebirds. In addition to the seven woodpecker species, several neo-tropical migrants make their home here. Join us as we hope to spot Eastern Bluebirds, Baltimore Orioles, Yellow-Throated and Prothonotary Warblers, Scarlet and Summer Tanagers, Belted Kingfishers, Indigo Buntings, Ruby-Throated Hummingbirds, White-eyed and Red-Eyed Vireos. New birders are welcome! (Members of Evansville Audubon Society's Junior Birders will assist with this hike.)

**Portions of these hikes may be ADA accessible. Please ask your hike guide for information.*

Families of a Feather: Migration

10:00-11:00 A.M.—at Wesselman Woods, 551 N. Boeke Rd., Evansville, IN; ages 8+

Many species of birds make heroic journeys to find resources as the seasons change. Find out more about the obstacles in their way, in this session of "Families of a Feather," a free monthly program providing interactive lessons for beginning birders and their guardians. *Further info at wesselmanwoods.org.*

Family Birding Fun!

10:30 A.M. --1:00 P.M.; Stop by anytime! Audubon Museum; J.J. Audubon SP

Make-N-Take Hummingbird Spinners—These incredible little birds flap their wings so quickly, their wingbeats appear to us as just a blur. Put together this optical illusion and watch to see your very own hummingbird fly!

Bird Olympics—How do your physical abilities compare to those of birds? Take the challenge at each bird station to get an amazing glimpse into bird survival.

Upcycled Bird Feeders—11 A.M. -1 P.M.

Bring your own clean, dry, plastic soda bottle (16.9 oz., 1-liter, or 2-liter) and let the staff of Wild Birds Unlimited help you repurpose it into a functional bird feeder for hours of at-home enjoyment. Limited to the first 125 participants.

This bird feeder activity is graciously supported by the Wild Birds Unlimited store at 5620 E. Virginia St., Evansville, IN.

Hands-on Bird Banding Workshop, with

Master Bird Bander, Scott Kramer

10:30 A.M.--12:30 P.M. Stop by anytime! Audubon Museum; J. J. Audubon SP



Help with an ongoing conservation project as we catch, identify, band, and release birds from John James Audubon State Park. Bird banding helps us understand bird migration, behavior,

social structure, lifespan and survival rates, and population trends. A great opportunity for seeing feathered friends up close, so bring a camera!

"Raptors Wild!" presented by The Talon Trust

11:30 A.M. --Friends of Audubon Meeting Room, J. J. Audubon SP; Donations accepted for The Talon Trust; Approx. 1 hr.

Enjoy an interactive personal experience with live raptors! Volunteers from The Talon Trust, Inc. will share stories of birds that have been injured and can't survive in the wild, and now serve as ambassadors for their species.

The Talon Trust, Inc. is a local volunteer-based organization dedicated to the conservation of native raptors through rescue, rehabilitation, and education. All donations received by The Talon Trust go to help feed and care for injured raptors.

Owl Puke--Yuck! Or Not?

12:45 P.M. --Audubon Museum Nature Center, J. J. Audubon SP; Approx. 30-45 mins.

The thought of owl puke may seem disgusting, but wait until you see what's inside that lump! These nocturnal hunters seek out all sorts of prey. Discover what critters the owls consider a tasty dinner when you dissect a sterilized owl pellet. You just may be amazed at what you find!

"Native Plants and You," presented by

Donnae Woolston of Ancient Roots Native Nursery, 5801 Hwy. 66, Poseyville, IN

1:30 P.M.—Audubon Museum, J.J. Audubon SP; Approx. 1 hr.

A yard planted as a monoculture or that leans heavily on the use of non-natives, creates a diversity desert. The difficulties of such an ecosystem have damaging effects on birds, insects, and wildlife. Learn what you can do to correct these issues in your own backyard and attract beneficial insects that directly feed our birds.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT – MANY OPENINGS NEED TO BE FILLED!!

First, the nominations committee would like to thank all of the Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs who have decided not to serve again because they are either term-limited or consider it is time to take a break after many years serving on the Board. They want to give other members the opportunity to carry on with the important and necessary work that make Evansville Audubon able to function. Without a complete and functioning slate of officers and directors, we will not be able to conduct the business necessary to continue as an effective chapter of National Audubon (see front page article on the recent praise Evansville Audubon received regarding their annual chapter report to National).

Following is the draft slate of candidates for our annual election in June. As you can see, we have several positions with vacancies. If you can devote a couple of hours for each of the 5 board meetings every other month Sept. thru May (June is the annual election and potluck), please contact Brian Taylor, President, brian.taylor@par.consulting, or Sue Vernier, Treasurer, rsavcaver2@gmail.com. They will be happy to answer any questions regarding job descriptions, etc.

Officers:

President – VACANCY (outgoing president is term limited)

Vice-President – Richard Vernier

Treasurer – Sue Vernier

Secretary – VACANCY (outgoing secretary is term limited)

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

VACANCY

VACANCY

Committee Chairs:

Programs – **VACANCY**

Jr. Birders - **VACANCY**

Evansville Audubon Society Minutes January 16, 2024

Program: at 6:00 PM – “Cranes Over Indiana” presented by the International Crane Foundation. The program focused on both the Sandhill and Whooping Cranes, their history, and current conservation. (by zoom)

Business Meeting convened at 7:03, by zoom only, No quorum, five board members present, vote by email will be needed for expenditures

Minutes: November 2023 meeting minutes approved

Treasurer's report, December 2023, (distributed by email):

Previous Month's Checking Account Balance: \$5552.19

Income – Donation – Appeal letter \$570, National Audubon Base Payment \$1035, Interest \$0.02, **Total Income \$1605.02**

Expenses: Wesselman Woods \$300, Program Fee Intl Crane Foundation \$100, **Total Expenses \$400.00**

Current Checking Account Balance: \$6757.21, Checking Without Reserves: \$2583.72

Reserve Account Balances: Education & Conservation - \$187.33, Jr. Birders \$280.00, Lewis Memorial \$3,706.16
Total \$4173.49

Other Accounts: Bulk Mail \$15.59, Savings \$5.09, Certificate of Deposit \$4,342.14, **Total \$4,362.82**

Expended Education & Conservation Money

Hover Lake FWA	\$900
Eagle Scout Bird Feeding	\$220
Tekoppel School Grant	\$700
IN Audubon - Wood Thrush	\$560
Wesselman Woods	\$300

Expended Lewis Memorial

\$303.84

Treasurer's note - To date we have received only \$2125 in response to our donation appeal so we will be short in the reserve account to meet our outstanding \$600 commitment to Patchwork Central and a new education grant request of \$800 from our Audubon Ambassador, Susan Fowler. A few more donations may trickle in; however, with the \$1035 payment from National and the realization of savings from our online only newsletter, we will have sufficient general funds to cover these two requests.

Committee Reports:

Field Trips - Field trip planned for February 3 to Land Between the Lakes, meet at Columbia Sports Store in Henderson at 6:00 AM. Expect waterfowl, gulls, raptors

Programs- March 19 th 2024 “Natives and You” by Donnarae of Ancient Roots Native Nursery

Junior Birders- no activity scheduled

Conservation-

-Weed Wrangle, Saturday March 16 at North Woods.

-IDEM meeting on March 8 at Oaklyn Library, 6:00, to discuss and take comments on the state's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant.

- A letter was submitted on behalf of EAS in support of a grant application for IRA funds (\$200,000) for tree

planting in underserved neighborhoods that is being prepared by the City of Evansville (Z. Garcia, S. Dickerson)

Education and Conservation Grants- Susan Fowler has requested \$800 to make her outreach presentations to schools, scouts, community groups, festivals, camps, and more. In Susan's report for 2023 she reached 409 students at Daniel Wertz, Tekoppel, Joshua Academy, Dexter, Evansville Christian, Thomkins, and Harwood schools, and Owensboro Museum Science/History.

Due to lack of a quorum, an email vote will be taken.

Events – No events scheduled

Media/Marketing- No update

Old Business : Annual meeting in June. We will need to elect a new President and a new Secretary, and four new Directors. Other officers and directors (not term limited) are eligible to continue.

New Business:

- The chapter certification report was sent to National Audubon.
- Climate Watch is Audubon's biannual community science program that enlists volunteer bird-lovers across North America to tally for twelve target bird species. Our winter session begins on January 15 and runs through February 15.

Items from the floor: none

Bird observations: several interesting regional sightings have been reported - Ross's goose, Red crossbill, Prairie falcon, Northern shrike

Meeting adjourned at about 8:00

Submitted by Niles Rosenquist, Secretary

Evansville Audubon Society
551 North Boeke Rd.
Evansville, IN 47711

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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Visit our website at: www.evvaudubon.org Or Facebook:
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):
