

Habitat Corner...

by Maury Brucker

Spring- the busiest time for birds- and for birders. Just not enough time to get out on the nice days to enjoy the sights. The bright colored migrant males are practicing singing as they head north. The local birds are singing on territory in our diverse landscape.

A breeding bird's territory is where the male bird sings most of the time, this is the preferred habitat of that species to raise young. The bird habitat will have a structure of plants and open spaces and will have food for birds now and the potential of more food when the young are rapidly growing. Now that the leaves are out, look around a little after enjoying seeing the bird. What types of plants are dominant? How thick are they growing? Even look for what types of insects are present? insects are critical, high protein foods that are essential for most baby birds and their frantically feeding parents. Also notice how many singing males there are in an area. If there are several territories in a relatively small area it is a good indicator that it is a highly productive habitat for the particular species. The final proof though is the amount of successful fledging. Happy birding!

May/June 1996

Bird's-Eye View

The Newsletter of

The Peoria Audubon Society...

A Chapter of National Audubon since 1981

Ornithological-Audubon Chapter of The Peoria Academy of Science since 1930



Species Spotlight... Wood Warblers

by Brenda Onken

It's Spring! This means different things to different people- warm weather, beautiful wildflowers and of course... WARBLERS! Yes, it's migration time, the time of the year that birders live for. Binoculars become a permanent piece of apparel. I walk around the house with mine on. As I open up the windows to let in the cool spring breeze, my ears strain to hear the sweet songs of the warblers, and when I do hear one, out the door I go. And of course to see them is a great feast for the eyes. These birds are very colorful. Many are beautifully marked with yellow, orange and shades of blue and green. They are small and flit around, which can present a challenge to really get a good look at them.

Warblers winter in southern United States, Central America and South America. Some of these birds stop here to forage on insects on their way to northern breeding grounds. Others will stay here to breed and raise their young. Most of these warblers are found in woodland habitat and since it is spring, chances are that you will hear them singing. The time spent finding these woodland gems will pay off with a fun reward. I suggest this method for finding warblers- follow the direction of the song, look for movement with your eyes, then bring your binoculars up and focus on the bird.

A bird field guide is essential for identification of these little "birdlets." Once you see and study these birds, their beauty will get you hooked. You may have to be patient, standing with your neck bent back for several minutes, while looking up into the top of a tree to spot a Parula or a Cerulean, or you may find yourself down on your knees looking through a thicket of brush for a Connecticut or a Mourning Warbler. I've been birding for 10 years now, and it was these birds that got me hooked... What was that song? It sounded like a Nashville Warbler! Time for this birder to get going. Have a beautiful spring and make sure that you get out to welcome back all of the birds.



Conservation Report...

by Less Bodell

Shawnee National Forest

On April 8, I had the pleasure of attending an Outdoor Recreation Program in Bloomington, where attorneys Gary Balesteros and Tom Buchele spoke on the lawsuit challenging the Shawnee National Forest Amendment Plan that would allow commercial logging, oil and gas exploration and construction of ATV trails. Both attorneys are members of the law firm Jenner and Block that represented Illinois Audubon Council, R.A.C.E. and The Sierra Club. Judge J. Phil Gilbert presided over the case and one of the many who testified was ornithologist Jean Graber. Jean's crucial testimony on neotropical migrating birds helped win the case. Judge Gilbert ruled that there would be a moratorium on commercial logging, ATV trails, and oil and gas exploration until the Forest Service has satisfactorily reworked the Forest Management Plan.

1996 Farm Bill

Congress finally passed and the President signed the 1996 Farm Bill. While the bill has many aspects, many concerning the environment were positive. Gains occurred in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), The Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), and Conservation Farm Option (CFO), and the Everglades. Setbacks occurred in the Swampbuster Program, Conservation Compliance and in the definition of agricultural land.

New! Healthy Habitats Action Network

An exciting new activity is being launched by National Audubon through the Great Lakes Regional Office— the Healthy Habitat Action Network. The purpose is to identify individuals who are interested in being involved in conservation activities on behalf of birds, wildlife and habitats. We will improve our mutual ability to influence public policy at the state and local level, train individuals to be of assistance, establish and maintain coalitions in support of wildlife issues, and to gain better media attention. All Audubon members and others are invited to participate. Just clip, fill out and mail the coupon below.

THE GREAT LAKES HEALTHY HABITAT ACTION NETWORK



- Learn steps you can take to better conserve and protect wildlife habitat
- Stay current on conservation issues affecting your state and community
- Receive training opportunities in skills you need to make a difference
- Attend important events in support of habitat conservation and protection

SIGN UP TODAY!

Send me information on the
Great Lakes Healthy Habitat Action Network

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to National Audubon Society, Great Lakes Regional Office,
692 N. High St., Suite 208, Columbus OH 43215
or call (614) 224-3303



Birdathon... Saturday, May 11

Peoria Audubon will have a team in the Birdathon. This event has the potential for becoming the premier environmental organization fundraiser in the Central Illinois area. Five teams consisting of Wildlife Prairie Park, Forest Park Nature Center, Peoria Audubon, The Nature Conservancy and Heart of Illinois Sierra Club will be searching Peoria County for our fine feathered friends. You can become a donor by pledging an amount per species. If you pledge for a certain team, that organization will receive the proceeds. A portion of the profits (25%) will go to The Partners in Flight Project— an international organization dedicating to the protection of neo-tropical migrants. Last year, 132 species were seen by three teams. Wildlife Prairie's and Forest Park Nature Center's teams tied for first place with 105 species each. To make your pledge, fill out the enclosed form and mail it to Greet Princen.

Here's my Pledge for the Birdathon:

Name _____

Street _____

City, State Zip _____

Phone # _____

Here's my pledge per species and team chosen: (note... if no team is chosen, pledge will be evenly divided among the teams)

Team pledge per species

Peoria Audubon	_____
Forest Park Nature Center	_____
HOI Sierra Club	_____
The Nature Conservancy	_____
Wildlife Prairie Park	_____

Mail this pledge to:
Greet Princen
677 E Highpoint Terr
Peoria, IL 61614

Recent Sightings...

Sightings by The Princen's... Special and First Sightings

American White Pelican (30+) Lake Chautauqua 3/16
 Eastern Phoebe MSD, Canton 4/6
 Rough-winged Swallow Lake near Duck Creek Station 4/6
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet Princen's yard 4/13
 Hermit Thrush MSD, Canton 4/6
 Water Pipit Banner Marsh 3/31
 Rufous-sided Towhee Princen's yard 4/14
 Chipping Sparrow Princen's yard 4/11

Sightings by Rick Fox and Tracy Meintz

Merlin Rt 29 & Old Galena Rd 4/1

On a trip along the Illinois River (South Loop, Peoria to Havana and Back) on Saturday, April 14, Rick and Tracy saw 71 species! Here are a few of the highlights:

American White Pelican Big Lake and Chautauqua
 Great Blue Heron
 Great Egret
 Canvasback
 Ruddy Duck
 Northern Harrier
 Lesser Yellowlegs
 Spotted Sandpiper
 Common Snipe
 Pileated Woodpecker
 Eastern Phoebe
 Golden Crowned Kinglet
 Hermit Thrush
 Brown Thrasher
 Yellow-Rumped Warbler
 Field Sparrow
 Eurasian Tree Sparrow

Sightings by Brenda Onken...

Yellow-Rumped Warbler, Rufous-sided Towhee, Brown Thrasher all at her house 4/15
 Lincoln's Sparrow at her feeder on 4/16

Field Trip Data from the April 6 MSD fieldtrip in Canton, IL

Pied-billed Grebe	Greater Yellowlegs	Red-winged Blackbird
Double-crested	Pectoral Sandpiper	Eastern Meadowlark
Cormorant	Common Snipe	Western Meadowlark
Great Blue Heron	Ring-billed Gull	Common Grackle
Great Egret	Rock Dove	Brown-headed
Mute Swan	Mourning Dove	Cowbird
White-fronted Goose	Great Horned Owl	Purple Finch
Canada Goose	Belted Kingfisher	House Finch
Wood Duck	Red-bellied	American Goldfinch
Green-winged Teal	Woodpecker	House Sparrow
Mallard	Downy Woodpecker	Eurasian Tree Sparrow
Blue-winged Teal	Northern Flicker	
Northern Shoveler	Eastern Phoebe	
Gadwall	Horned Lark	
American Wigeon	Tree Swallow	
Canvasback	Rough-winged Swallow	
Redhead	Blue Jay	
Ring-necked Duck	American Crow	
Lesser Scaup	Black-capped	
Common Goldeneye	Chickadee	
Bufflehead	Tufted Titmouse	
Hooded Merganser	White-breasted	
Common Merganser		



Field Trips...

Spring Counts... Saturday May 4

Peoria Audubon will be involved in several county bird counts throughout Central Illinois. If you are interested in participating, contact Mike Miller at Forest Park Nature Center (686-3360) to find out more about who will be leading counts in your area.

Birdathon... Saturday, May 11

See info on Page 2

Early Worm Bird Walks

Sunday's 6:00 AM, April 16 - May 26

Forest Park Nature Center

Join Chief Naturalist, Mike Miller, and be one of the early worms that catches the bird! A great place to spot woodland warblers and other forest dwellers. Call (309)686-3360 for more info.

More Sightings...

from Dr. Bjorklund...

March 15 @ Lake Chautauqua

American White Pelican (30-34)
 110,000 ast. mixed waterfowl
 8-10 Bald Eagles. note the eagle nest is repaired and active!
 Tundra and Trumpeter Swans

March 15 @ Sand Ridge State Forest
 4 Wild Turkey's sporting 6 inch "Beards"

March 17 @ Dr. B's seed feeders
 House Finch, Purple Finch, Common Redpoll,
 American Goldfinch, Pine Siskin.

March 22 @ Lake Chautauqua
 7 adult, 5 immature Bald Eagles, female Northern Harrier, 8 Water Pipit, 11 species of ducks and Canada Goose.

April 3 @ Sand Ridge State Forest
 Spotted Sandpiper, Phoebe, Evening Grosbeak, Wood Duck, Mallard, Wild Turkey.

April 6 @ Lake Chautauqua
 10 Turkey Vulture, female Northern harrier again, 2 adult (at nest), 5 immature Bald Eagles, 52 Bonaparte's Gulls, Over 4,000 Wood Ducks plus 15 other duck species, both morphs of Snow Geese, 307 Double-crested Cormorant.

12 April @ Lake Chautauqua
 Adult Bald Eagle at nest possibly incubating eggs, 7 immature Bald Eagles wading in shallows with Great Blue Herons, Osprey, 18 Bonaparte's Gull, 15 species of ducks, over 5,000 shorebirds.

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Send submissions to:

Birds Eye View c/o Mike Miller

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5809 Forest Park Drive

Peoria IL 61614

email xxfpnc@heartland.bradley.edu

FAX (309) 686-8820



**PEORIA AUDUBON SOCIETY
PEORIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE
1125 West Lake Avenue
Peoria IL 61614**

Upcoming Meetings...

Friday, May 10, 7:00 PM @ Forest Park Nature Center...

Membership Meeting

Program: Gordon Adams, armature entomologist and butterfly authority will present a program on backyard butterfly gardening.

No meetings in June, July and August

Membership meetings will start up again on:

Wednesday, September 11, 7:00 PM @ Forest Park Nature Center. program to be announced.

Wednesday, October 9, 7:00 PM @ Forest Park Nature Center. Program to be announced.

Wednesday, November 13, 7:00 PM @ Lakeview Museum of Arts and Science. program to be announced.

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