

Bird's-Eye View

Autumn
2001

The Newsletter of The Peoria Audubon Society

A Chapter of National Audubon since 1981

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



Ramblings from the Prez ...

Over the last few months, I have helped with the Peoria Audubon Central Illinois River Bird Census. We are close to gathering a year of data. It has been one of the most enjoyable activities I have been involved with. It has helped me develop in my own mind the need for the preservation of areas for migratory and resident bird species alike.

In the short time I have helped with the survey, I have seen areas go from being productive birding spots to nonproductive areas. This is usually due to some change brought about by the deleterious effects of humans. It is often something sublime and unintentional – such as a mudflat that is one week full of shorebirds, but the next week devoid of life and marred with the tracks of ATVs and 4-wheelers. Surely there must be some place that we can dedicate for the preservation of bird species.

The establishment of a local Peoria Audubon Bird Sanctuary offers an opportunity for this to be achieved. The Sanctuary Committee has labored over the last year in establishing the fund and promoting its awareness throughout the community. We also need your local support. Each Peoria Audubon Member will soon receive information about the Sanctuary Fund and how to become a founder of this exciting and crucial movement. Our local bird populations need this sanctuary, and our local bird enthusiasts are needed to make this vision a reality. Please do all you can to support the cause!

Calendar

Wednesday, Sept 12, 7:00 PM

Membership Meeting, Forest Park Nature Center

Dr. Donald Hey of The Wetlands Initiative will discuss the recent restoration project near Hennepin. Jason Kneeland of National Audubon's Public Policy Office will discuss efforts to safeguard Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil drilling.

Wednesday, Oct 10, 7:00 PM

Membership Meeting, Forest Park Nature Center

John Mullen, the new naturalist at the Nature Center, will share his knowledge of indicator species in old growth forests. New to Central Illinois from the Pacific Northwest, John promises an insider's look at Spotted Owls, Marbled Murrelets, and more.

Saturday, Oct 27, 8:00 AM

Field Trip, Metropolitan Sanitary District

A waterfowl extravaganza in this area near Canton, accessible only by special permission. Meet in downtown Farmington at 8:00 AM or at the MSD headquarters at 8:30 AM. Contact Bert Princen at 309-691-0519 to RSVP.

All meetings and field trips are free and open to the public.

For directions, call Forest Park Nature Center at 309-686-3360.

Calling All Birders ...

Volunteer for the Central Illinois River Bird Census

Since February, Peoria Audubon has been conducting weekly surveys of Upper and Lower Peoria Lakes. As we move into autumn, bird activity on the river is picking up. Recent surveys have located American White Pelicans, an Osprey, Bald Eagles, and more. Look for a full report in the next newsletter.

There are four routes between Peoria and Lacon; a route takes about two hours to complete. Routes can be run at your convenience -- any time from Friday to Monday on the week you volunteer. All you need is a spotting scope and the ability to identify Central Illinois birds. If you're interested in volunteering, or just want to come along on one of the counts, contact coordinator Rick Fox (309-579-3264 or rickfox@mtco.com).

Peoria Audubon Sanctuary Fund News & Notes

The Sanctuary Committee continues to work toward the goal of establishing a Central Illinois sanctuary for birds and birdwatching.

Committee members Maury Brucker and Rick Fox gave a presentation on "Restoring Bird Habitat" at Conservation Expo on August 29. The presentation was designed to both explain Audubon's Sanctuary program and help connect landowners with resources for conserving bird habitat and birds.

The committee also developed an all-member mailing, outlining the goals of the Sanctuary Initiative and asking for contributions. Look for it in your mailbox soon.

Seeded by the successful auction last March, the Peoria Audubon Sanctuary Fund continues to grow. Thanks to the following donors in the first half of 2001:

- Jim & Lou Baldwin
- Maury Brucker
- Ella & Frank Davison (in memory of Murrie Lewis)
- Rick & Tracy Fox
- John Onken
- Bill & Norma Schepka
- Emiko Yang

Conservation Notes

Celebrate Two Important Victories for Land Preservation in Central Illinois ...

This summer, the Peoria Park District formally dedicated the Singing Woods tract north of Peoria as an Illinois State Nature Preserve. This permanently protects over 800 acres of oak-hickory woodland. The Fondulac Park District purchased Fondulac Seep (in conjunction with the Cooper mansion), adjacent to another Illinois State Nature Preserve, Bennett's Terraqueous Gardens. Both Park Districts are to be commended for their commitment to land preservation and their stewardship of our natural heritage. Peoria Audubon applauds these efforts.

Keep an Eye on Root Cemetery

Root Cemetery, an Illinois State Nature Preserve near Chillicothe, has recently come under fire. Local residents and area history buffs have criticized the tall grass prairie wildflowers and asked the cemetery owner, Hallock Township, to resume mowing the area. Ann Frye of the Volunteer Stewardship Network manages restoration activity at the site and is interested in any bird records Audubon members might have from Root Cemetery. Documenting the ecological value of the prairie niche will be key to its long-term preservation. Direct any sightings to Tracy Fox (see below).

Let Senator Fitzgerald Know Where You Stand on Arctic Drilling

Recently, the House passed H.R. 4, a bill that includes drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The Senate has yet to take up companion legislation, but it is certain that there will be a battle over the issue on the floor. Illinois Senator Peter Fitzgerald is a KEY swing vote on this issue and, in the past, has stood with only a handful of Republicans opposed to Arctic drilling. Take the time to let Senator Fitzgerald know that you believe the Arctic NWR should be preserved for wildlife.

The Honorable Peter Fitzgerald
555 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

At our September 12th meeting, Jason Kneeland, a National Audubon Regional Grassroots Coordinator, will be presenting an update on Arctic NWR, upcoming legislation, and efforts to keep drilling out of the refuge. Jason works in Washington DC and should provide us with an "inside the beltway" perspective on the issue.

Contact Tracy Fox (309-579-3264, tracyfox@mtco.com) or visit www.peoriaaudubon.org for more information on any of these issues.

Spring Count Recap

The Spring Bird Counts on May 5, 2001 netted a number of interesting results. Eurasian Collared Doves showed up for the first time in both Mason and Woodford counties. This bird is making inroads throughout the state – watch your feeders carefully this fall.

In Fulton County, six Snow Geese and a high count of 43 Bobolinks were notable. Another highlight from Mason county was 24 Red Crossbills seen in Sand Ridge State Forest. This is the highest spring count in recent years, but not unexpected after the 97 Red Crossbills report on the 2000/2001 Chautauqua Christmas Count.

Peoria County also had a high Bobolink count of 40 as well as a Prairie Warbler, a species not seen on any of the area Spring Counts in the past five years. The high counts, as well as the fact that Bobolinks were seen in four of the five area counties, may indicate that this species is benefitting from the numerous prairie restoration efforts in Central Illinois.

Another species that seems to be doing is well is Cooper's Hawks which appeared in three counties -- and were the first recorded during a Spring Count in the past five years in both Fulton and Woodford counties. Recently removed from the Illinois Threatened List, this species demonstrates that endangered and threatened species protection does work.

The main species that appeared to be endangered in our Spring Counts is birders. All of our counts show a steady decline in participation. The Spring Counts provide a critical baseline used by scientists to assess the health of migratory bird populations and by decisionmakers at all level of government to make conservation policy. Please consider giving the effort a hand next year on May 4, 2002.

Congratulations to Mason County Coordinator, Dr. Richard Bjorklund, IDNR Volunteer of the Year

At this year's State Fair, Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director Brent Manning recognized Dr. Richard Bjorklund as one of ten outstanding volunteers for 2001. Dr. Bjorklund, a retired Bradley biology professor, is a mainstay in Central Illinois bird conservation efforts. He coordinates Spring and Christmas counts, has conducted weekly surveys at Chautauqua for the past six years, and has monitored the Clear Lake and Worley Lake heron rookeries for the past 40 years. Peoria Audubon applauds Dr. Bjorklund for his efforts and his award.

Birdathon Wrap-Up

The Peoria Audubon Birdathon took place on May 12, 2001 and raised \$993 for several worthy causes. Of the 120 species located by two teams canvassing Central Illinois, five were not found on any of the Spring Counts – American White Pelican, Caspian Tern, Philadelphia Vireo, Pine Warbler, and Henslow's Sparrow. The teams made heroic efforts to break the 1999 record of 145 species. Finding twenty-one species of warblers helped boost the numbers, but a short supply of both ducks and shorebirds kept the total low.

The annual Birdathon raises money for Peoria Audubon, the new Peoria Audubon Sanctuary Fund, as well as Partners in Flight. Partners in Flight is an international nonprofit organization focused on bird conservation, through local initiatives, in Central and South America. Supporters pledge a small amount per species seen on the Birdathon. The amount of money raised is directly proportional to the number of birds seen by all participating teams.

Thanks to Maury Brucker, Rick Fox, Chris and Dale Goodner, and Mike Miller who did the birding and to the many Audubon members and supporters who gave generously to the cause.

2001 Spring Bird Count/Birdathon Results

Common Name	Fulton	Mason	Peoria	Tazewell	Woodford	Birdathon	Highest
Common Loon		1					1
Pied-Billed Grebe				2			2
American White Pelican						x	
Double-Crested Cormorant	4	104	8	3	8	x	104
Great Blue Heron	45	474	20	63	12	x	474
Great Egret	14	44	10	10		x	44
Cattle Egret	1						1
Green Heron	8	5		2	2	x	8
Turkey Vulture	50	40	17	8	15	x	50
Snow Goose	6					x	6
Canada Goose	438	114	39	306	86	x	438
Mute Swan	9		2	8		x	9
Wood Duck	23	150	11	63	4	x	150
Gadwall		1					1
Mallard	32	36	23	14	42	x	42
Blue-Winged Teal	7	27		2			27
Lesser Scaup	3						3
Red-Breasted Merganser				1			1
Osprey		1					1
Bald Eagle		5				x	5
Cooper's Hawk	1	1			1		1
Broad-Winged Hawk			2			x	2
Red-Tailed Hawk	12	7	8	2	16	x	16
American Kestrel	6	2	1	3	2	x	6
Ring-Necked Pheasant	1	31	2		8	x	31
Wild Turkey	1	7		1		x	7
Northern Bobwhite	5	7				x	7
Sora		3	1				3
American Coot	6	7	4	2	2	x	7
Semipalmated Plover		2					2
Killdeer	33	53	7	11	26	x	53
Greater Yellowlegs	2	1					2
Lesser Yellowlegs	3	4				x	4
Solitary Sandpiper	4	8	1	2	2	x	8
Spotted Sandpiper	7	21		9		x	21
Semipalmated Sandpiper		18		2		x	18
Least Sandpiper		8				x	8
Pectoral Sandpiper	4	1	1	1		x	4
Dunlin		1				x	1
Common Snipe				1			1
Ring-Billed Gull	3	5	7	95	7	x	95
Caspian Tern						x	
Common Tern			1				1
Forster's Tern		11				x	11
Black Tern		1					1
Rock Dove	26	30	28	31	28	x	31
Eurasian Collared Dove		1			1		1
Mourning Dove	127	69	38	69	160	x	160
Black-Billed Cuckoo			1			x	1
Yellow-Billed Cuckoo		1			2	x	2
Great Horned Owl	2					x	2
Barred Owl	1	7					7
Common Nighthawk	3	3		1		x	3
Chuck-Will's-Widow		2					2
Whip-Poor-Will	5	18				x	18
Chimney Swift	131	22	51	23	62	x	131
Ruby-Throated Hummingbird	10	2			1	x	10

2001 Spring Bird Count/Birdathon Results

Common Name	Fulton	Mason	Peoria	Tazewell	Woodford	Birdathon	Highest
Belted Kingfisher		3		2	2	x	3
Red-Headed Woodpecker	30	43	12	13	12	x	43
Red-Bellied Woodpecker	14	32	14	26	17	x	32
Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker	2						2
Downy Woodpecker	12	21	13	10	16	x	21
Hairy Woodpecker		1			1		1
Northern Flicker	10	20	19	6	14	x	20
Pileated Woodpecker	2	3	2	1		x	3
Eastern Wood Peewee		5				x	5
Acadian Flycatcher	1		1				1
Least Flycatcher		3	2		3	x	3
Eastern Phoebe	16	2	7	3	12	x	16
Great-Crested Flycatcher	8	40	26	10	6	x	40
Eastern Kingbird	33	15	9	10	15	x	33
White-Eyed Vireo		2		1	1		2
Bell's Vireo	1						1
Yellow-Throated Vireo	2	3	2	1	5		5
Blue-Headed Vireo					1		1
Warbling Vireo	25	18	30	18	18	x	30
Philadelphia Vireo						x	
Red-Eyed Vireo	5	18	9	1	6	x	18
Blue Jay	46	120	20	67	67	x	120
American Crow	95	36	31	54	70	x	95
Horned Lark	20	13	3	2	34		34
Purple Martin	44	20	8	11	56	x	56
Tree Swallow	27	623	153	127	55	x	623
Northern Rough-Winged Swallow	13	13	32	12	65	x	65
Bank Swallow	2			53	20	x	53
Cliff Swallow	34	1		1		x	34
Barn Swallow	94	64	52	62	108	x	108
Black-Capped Chickadee	18	25	30	5	25	x	30
Tufted Titmouse	24	20	16	4	14	x	24
Red-Breasted Nuthatch					1		1
White-Breasted Nuthatch	6	5	9	6	4	x	9
Brown Creeper			1				1
Carolina Wren	4	3	5		6		6
House Wren	58	55	45	17	34	x	58
Ruby-Crowned Kinglet					4	x	4
Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher	6	1	16		8	x	16
Eastern Bluebird	51	24	5	4	16	x	51
Veery		2			3		3
Gray-Cheeked Thrush		1			1		1
Swainson's Thrush		3	3	2	4	x	4
Hermit Thrush		1					1
Wood Thrush	5	15	3	4	8	x	15
American Robin	401	282	105	332	298	x	401
Gray Catbird	129	48	28	45	18	x	129
Northern Mockingbird		6	3	2	3		6
Brown Thrasher	26	43	9	12	26	x	43
European Starling	322	213	35	335	223	x	335
Cedar Waxwing	3	21			18	x	21
Blue-Winged Warbler	2	1	3				3
Golden-Winged Warbler		1	6				6
Tennessee Warbler	3	56	24	3	10	x	56
Nashville Warbler		18	11		6	x	18
Northern Parula		5	5		8		8
Yellow Warbler	9	9	6	10	22	x	22
Chestnut-Sided Warbler		3	7	1	4	x	7

2001 Spring Bird Count/Birdathon Results

Common Name	Fulton	Mason	Peoria	Tazewell	Woodford	Birdathon	Highest
Magnolia Warbler			2		1	x	2
Cape May Warbler		5	1	1	6		6
Yellow-Rumped Warbler	2	98	15	4	21	x	98
Black-Throated Green Warbler	1	10	4	2	4	x	10
Blackburnian Warbler		2	1			x	2
Yellow-Throated Warbler			3				3
Pine Warbler						x	
Prairie Warbler			1				1
Palm Warbler		29	7	5	10	x	29
Bay-Breasted Warbler		2	2			x	2
Blackpoll Warbler		6	6		7	x	7
Cerulean Warbler						x	
Black-and-White Warbler		6			4	x	6
American Redstart		6	3			x	6
Prothonotary Warbler	1	11	9			x	11
Worm-Eating Warbler			1				1
Ovenbird		28	1			x	28
Northern Waterthrush		18	2	1	5		18
Louisiana Waterthrush	4		2		11	x	11
Kentucky Warbler		3				x	3
Common Yellowthroat	78	35	23	5	27	x	78
Wilson's Warbler		1				x	1
Yellow-Breasted Chat		2					2
Summer Tanager	2	3					3
Scarlet Tanager		13	9	2	6	x	13
Eastern Towhee	22	91	12	12	12	x	91
Chipping Sparrow	54	74	34	6	55	x	74
Field Sparrow	26	42	12	5	14	x	42
Vesper Sparrow	1	5	1		3	x	5
Lark Sparrow	4	17			2	x	17
Savannah Sparrow	6	7	8		4	x	8
Grasshopper Sparrow	8	30	5	1	2	x	30
Henslow's Sparrow						x	
Song Sparrow	24	35	19	7	32	x	35
Lincoln's Sparrow		1					1
Swamp Sparrow		4	1				4
White-Throated Sparrow	3	26	11	6	28		28
White-Crowned Sparrow	33	26	3	6	24		33
Northern Cardinal	122	81	34	61	105	x	122
Rose-Breasted Grosbeak	46	85	27	42	18	x	85
Indigo Bunting	66	71	53	12	25	x	71
Dickcissel	6	27			6	x	27
Bobolink	43	4	40		4		43
Red-Winged Blackbird	700	1122	598	354	315	x	1122
Eastern Meadowlark	73	88	30	2	42	x	88
Western Meadowlark	4						4
Common Grackle	360	360	82	512	291	x	512
Brown-Headed Cowbird	63	61	44	56	80	x	80
Orchard Oriole	2	4		1	2	x	4
Baltimore Oriole	96	103	32	40	31	x	103
House Finch	20	6	25	10	26	x	26
Red Crossbill		24					24
American Goldfinch	109	98	75	101	205	x	205
House Sparrow	302	187	55	216	275	x	302
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	5	20		10		x	20
Total Species	106	139	105	91	103	120	139
Total Individuals	4922	6313	2396	3488	3558		6313
Total Species Observed — All Counties Plus Birdathon							169

2001 Fourth of July Butterfly Count Takes Wing

Peoria's second Fourth of July Butterfly count took place July 14. The count brought out 10 participants, 39 species, and 1127 individual butterflies (and skippers). The good news is the number of individual butterflies counted was almost double that of the first count 2000; the not-so-good news is that over half of the increase was in cabbage butterflies. Notably, eleven species were reported this year that were not found on last year's count including two sulphur species, Snouts, Silvery Checkerspot (which are really prolific this year in Singing Woods), American and Painted Ladies, and four species of skippers.

The Fourth of July Butterfly Counts are organized by the North American Butterfly Association, and run similarly to the Audubon Christmas Bird Counts. Teams of participants count butterflies in a count circle with a 15-mile radius. National results are published in an annual yearbook.

Peoria Audubon organized a Central Illinois butterfly count because we believe that a baseline understanding of butterfly populations is critical to ensuring these species continue to thrive. This year we welcomed several participants from the Entomology section of the Peoria Academy of Sciences and we look forward to continued collaboration with them.

SWALLOWTAILS

Pipevine Swallowtail	15
Black Swallowtail	25
Giant Swallowtail	4
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	23
Spicebush Swallowtail	8

WHITES & SULPHURS

Cabbage White	616
Clouded Sulphur	25
Orange Sulphur/Alfalfa	40
Cloudless Sulphur	2
Little Yellow	3
Dainty Sulphur	2

GOSSAMER WINGS

Eastern Tailed Blue	16
Spring Azure	11

BRUSHFOOTS

Snout	5
Great Spangled Fritillary	38
Gorgone Checkerspot	1
Silvery Checkerspot	14
Pearl Crescent	43
Question Mark	13
Eastern Comma	3
Mourning Cloak	1
American (Painted) Lady	1
Painted Lady	11
Red Admiral	42
Common Buckeye	1
Red-Spotted Purple	7
Viceroy	4
Hackberry/Hackberry Emperor	1
Little Wood Satyr	82
Common Wood Nymph	2
Monarch	13

SKIPPERS

Silver-Spotted Skipper	28
Northern Cloudywing	5
Juvenal's Duskywing	1
Horace's Duskywing	4
Mottled Duskywing	4
Common Sootywing	8
Least Skipper	3
Peck's Skipper	2

Total Individuals 1127
Total Species 39

Next year's count is scheduled for July 13, 2002. We hope to broaden participation and begin using the results to educate the public about butterflies and their needs.

Recruit a New Member

Take the time to invite a friend to join Peoria Audubon. Membership in the Peoria Audubon Society includes National Audubon membership, and an *Audubon* magazine subscription. There is strength in numbers and, together, we can act as an effective voice for birds and their conservation needs in Central Illinois.

Membership in Peoria Audubon includes membership in National Audubon and the Peoria Academy of Sciences.

- ☐ Introductory \$20
- ☐ Regular/Renewal \$35
- ☐ Student/Senior \$15
- ☐ Local Program Donation \$_____
- ☐ Peoria Audubon Sanctuary Fund \$_____

*Make checks payable to
Peoria Audubon Society.*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

St/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Peoria Audubon Chapter: G66

Send your membership form to:

Peoria Audubon Society
c/o Greet Princen
677 East High Point Terrace
Peoria, Illinois 61614
309-691-0519



Saturday, September 15, 2001

River Sweep 2001 is the second annual one-day cleanup of the Illinois River and its tributaries. Last year teams scoured the river banks and offshore islands and pulled out literally tons of trash, old tires, barge rope, and even an air conditioner, box springs, and a swing set.

In the first River Sweep, one-third of volunteers statewide came from Central Illinois. Mark your calendars and help ensure this year's event is equally successful. Activities will be taking place in communities all along the river, accompanied by drawings for gifts, free lunches, and more. Who knows what you might find?

For more information about activities in Pekin, East Peoria, and Peoria, contact:

Wendy Russ, Heartland Water Resources Council
309- 637-5253, hwrc@mtco.com

For more information about Chillicothe events, contact:

Ron Dunbar, North Hampton Hill Prairies
309- 274-9121, northhamptonhillprairies@bwsys.net

Peoria Audubon Society
677 E. High Point Terrace
Peoria IL 61614

Peoria Audubon

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