

Bird's-eye View



Watch the Mail!
Audubon seed sale order forms
will be available in October

September
Fall Activities Issue
2004

The Newsletter of The Peoria Audubon Society

www.peoriaaudubon.org

Chapter of National Audubon since 1981

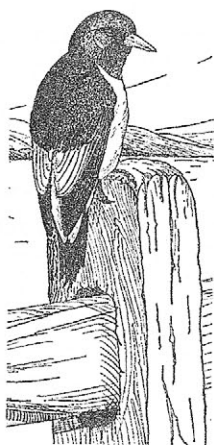
Chapter of the Peoria Academy of Science since 1930

Audubon Calendar...

Wednesday, Sep 8 @ 7 pm
Membership Meeting
Forest Park Nature Center
Doug Blodgett of The Nature Conservancy, Illinois Chapter, is the Program Director of the Emiquon Wetlands Restoration Project. The project is one of, if not the largest, wetland restorations in the country. Doug will present a geographical and cultural history of the area, and discuss project activity to date, current status, and plans.

Wednesday, Oct 13 @ 7 pm
Membership Meeting
Forest Park Nature Center
Pam Blackledge of the National Environmental Trust is the Great Lakes Regional Organizer for the Conserve Our Ocean Legacy campaign. Pam will discuss the Trust and the campaign—its organization, goals and strategies, and activities. Both National and Illinois Audubon endorse this project.

Wednesday, Nov 10 @ 7 pm
Membership Meeting
Forest Park Nature Center
"Fire, Habitat Restoration, and Birds in Illinois" with Jeff Brawn, Program Director, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Illinois. Many species of birds in Illinois depend on habitats that are created or maintained by some



type of ecological disturbance such as fire or flooding. Without periodic disturbance, these habitats undergo ecological succession and become unsuitable for many bird species. In Illinois, these habitats include grasslands, shrublands, oak savannas, and floodplain forest. Jeff will present information on birds of successional habitats in Illinois and how they respond to disturbance and habitat restoration. Emphasis will be on savanna birds such as the Red-headed Woodpecker.

Nature Center Programs...

Thursdays, Sep 9-30 @ 7-9 pm
"Bird Identification Made Easy"
with Dr. Bert Princen who brings his bird identification skills and in-depth knowledge of life histories to Forest Park Nature Center on four evenings in September. This class will cover all aspects of birding from binoculars to birding hot spots. Cost is \$20 for FPNC members and \$24 for Peoria Park District residents. Call 686-3360 for more information and to preregister (required).

Saturday, Oct 23 @ 1:30 pm
The Basics of Bird Feeding with Mike Miller. Want to watch beautiful and fascinating native birds from your window? Put out a bird feeder! This short course will give you the information you need to make your front or back yard appealing to many different kinds of birds. The various kinds of bird feeders, bird feeder placement, types of seed and suet mixes, and some general bird lore will be presented. Plus, take home a free sample of our own Forest Park Special Mix.

May 8 Spring Count Wrap-Up

Helen Gasdorf on Fulton County...

The highlight of the Fulton count was a reclaimed strip mine area in Middlegrove. Several fields have been planted for years in alfalfa and, in the area, we usually find a good representation of grassland birds. This year 35 Bobolinks were sighted and we also found Field Sparrows, a Vesper Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrows, Savannah Sparrows, Dickcissels, and Bobwhites. The ponds and surrounding woods at the Farmington Sanitary District also provide excellent birding. Here we saw all of the species of swallows, Spotted Sandpipers, Solitary Sandpipers, Eastern Kingbirds, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. This year's Fulton results showed 4285 birds of 116 species with high counts of Eastern Kingbirds, American Robins, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, American Goldfinches, Baltimore Orioles, and, of course, Canada Geese (in all those strip mine ponds in the area).

Dick Bjorklund on Mason County...

This year brought 159 species and 8793 birds. The count included bald eagles at two active nests, 9 species of ducks, 4 species of herons, 12 species of shorebirds, 6 species of woodpeckers, 6 species of swallows, 5 species of flycatchers, 5 species of vireos, 10 species of true sparrows and an amazing 28 species of warblers. It also confirmed that Eurasian Collared Doves are becoming well-established in the area. Thanks to all participants!

Mike Miller on Peoria County...

The 2004 Peoria County bird count had three teams that sighted 104 species and 2088 individual birds. The woodlands of Peoria County turned up 24 species of warblers, but numbers all around were quite low. Notably absent were shorebirds—which were almost nonexistent. This was the lowest count on recent record for the county with previous low species count being 105 in 2001. The highest species count was 130 in 2000. Thanks to all involved—Dale Goodner, Allen Carr, Louise Augustine, Tom Pucelick, and John Mullen.

Tracy Fox on Tazewell County...

Rick and I covered all of Tazewell County and came up with 5085 birds of 102 species. The day started slow and ended late, but a huge flock of assorted waders and shorebirds at Worley Lake (just north of Pekin off Route 8) turned the day into a birding bonanza. Over 150 Great Blue Herons and 50 Great Egrets at Worley pushed the total counts for both these species to the highest in eight years. Thirteen species of shorebirds in a flock of over 1600 included an American Avocet, 225 Lesser Yellowlegs, 200 Semipalmated Sandpipers, 125 Least Sandpipers, 125 Western Sandpipers, 750 Pectoral Sandpipers, and 125 Dunlin as well as smaller numbers of more common species. For 10 of the 13 shorebird species, the counts were the highest in eight years. Another bonus at Worley Lake was a lone Bonaparte's Gull. These results have been shared with the Army Corps of Engineers (currently planning a major restoration project in the area) to emphasize the importance of migratory stopover habitat for shorebirds.

Brenda Garman on Woodford County...

It was a fun day for Vicki, Gary, Sharon, and me. We saw 100 species and 2748 birds, which was average. What typically brings the Woodford count up is a fallout of shorebirds or a lingering bunch of waterfowl, which we didn't get. We had 20 species of warblers—a little low—but we had pretty good numbers of the ones we did see. I looked high and low for thrushes and came up with only 4 Wood Thrushes. We had a Northern Harrier, which I very seldom see on the Spring count in my area. We enjoyed hearing the Rose-Breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Buntings, and Baltimore Orioles singing. Roanoke still had their 2 Eurasian Collared Doves. Thank you to the one Grasshopper Sparrow that sang for us!

Save These Upcoming Count Dates ...

Peoria Christmas Count	Dec 18
Chautauqua Christmas Count	Dec 23
Chillicothe Christmas Count	Jan 2
2005 Spring Bird Count	May 7
2005 4th of July Butterfly Count	Jul 9

Butterfly Count News

Despite overcast skies and wind, the 13 participants in the fifth annual Fourth of July Butterfly count did pretty well. The 37 species (including the first Variegated Fritillary on the count) were a bit lower than usual, but the 1821 total individuals was a count high. Thanks to all who helped out.

Black Swallowtail	16
Giant Swallowtail	5
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	8
Spicebush Swallowtail	1
Cabbage White	927
Clouded Sulphur	19
Orange Sulphur (Alfalfa)	475
Cloudless Sulphur	1
Little Yellow	3
Gray Hairstreak	2
Eastern Tailed Blue	21
Spring/Summer Azure	73
Great Spangled Fritillary	16
Variegated Fritillary	1
Pearl Crescent	35
Question Mark	3
Eastern Comma	8
American Lady	1
Painted Lady	2
Red Admiral	9
Common Buckeye	2
Red-Spotted Purple	5
Viceroy	3
Hackberry	1
Little Wood Satyr	74
Common Wood Nymph	21
Monarch	13
Silver-Spotted Skipper	2
Sleepy Duskywing	11
Juvenal's Duskywing	24
Horace's Duskywing	2
Least Skipper	18
Peck's Skipper	2
Tawny-Edged Skipper	5
Dion Skipper	1
Common Roadside Skipper	4
Total Individuals	1821
Total Species	37

Illinois River Sweep

FRIENDS OF THE illinois river



What?

An annual volunteer effort to beautify the Illinois River and its watershed by picking up trash and litter.

How?

A River Sweep captain in each community organizes volunteers. Friends of the Illinois River provides free shirts, work gloves, and trash bags for the cleanup event.

Saturday, September 18

To get involved, contact Peoria area captain John Mullen (309-686-3360) or call the toll-free hotline (866-584-1310).

Conservation Notes...



from Maury Brucker

In July, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers presented a revised lock and dam enlargement proposal which now includes substantial funds for river ecosystem restoration. The new restoration aspect of the proposal finally recognizes the continuing biological degradation of the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers. Although the \$5.4 billion restoration work proposal is spread over a 50-year period, the first 15 years of work are linked to the \$2.4 billion lock and dam enlargement.

The Peoria Audubon Society is now supporting the proposal linking restoration with the lock expansion. The current proposal has changed from the previous inflated economic benefits study which was discredited by a National Academy of Science review. The current proposal includes additional reviews of the freight demand needs for new locks before construction begins.



Hummer of a Day at Forest Park

by John Mullen

Saturday, August 14th saw the Peoria area's first annual "Hummingbird Festival" at Forest Park Nature Center. While there weren't a whole lot of hummingbirds to be seen, the ones that were there were certainly appreciated as nearly 35 people stopped by the banding and information desk to see hummingbirds close up and feel their hearts beat. Vernon Kleen (a licensed hummingbird bander) came up from Springfield to capture, band, and talk about the birds and allow the visitors to hold and release them. The purpose of banding is to determine how far into Mexico or Central America the birds go for the winter, where they stop during their travels, how long they live, and whether they come back to the same sites year after year. The hummingbirds were captured by a unique "remote control" trapping mechanism, held only long enough to record basic data, then released. Birds banded here in Illinois have already been found in Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Texas.

A total of six Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were banded along with two Black-capped Chickadees. Each hummingbird, as well as the chickadees, were "adopted" by visitors who donated at least \$5 to the Illinois Audubon Land Acquisition Fund. Donors received a certificate of adoption which contained the leg band number of the bird and will be notified in the future whenever their band number shows up again. Several visitors were very generous—we were able to raise over \$300 during the four-hour festival. Many thanks! Also thanks to Vernon Kleen for sharing his time and expertise, to Vern's assistant who operated the remote control, to Jim Parrott of Wild Birds Unlimited for lending several hummingbird feeders and keeping them filled, and to all the others who helped in filling the feeders. It was a special experience to see these amazing birds up close and feel the 1000 beats-per-minute of a ruby-throat's heart!

Did you know?

- During regular flight, ruby-throats beat their wings 50-70 times per second. Compare this to 4.3 for a European starling and 4.9 for an American goldfinch.
- Ruby-throats' hearts beat 600-1200 times per minute, depending on the amount of exertion. The average for birds is 200 and for humans is 72.
- Ruby-throats at rest take 250 breaths per minute. Wild turkeys take 7 and humans take 12.
- Ruby-throats can attain flight speeds of more than 50 miles per hour, and even more when flying with the wind.



Invite a friend to join us...

Why join?

- Learn about birds, their natural habitats, and related conservation issues through monthly programs and special events.
- Sharpen your bird identification skills through field trips and networking with other local bird enthusiasts.
- Contribute to the collective knowledge of Central Illinois birds by participating in bird counts and censuses.
- Pass your knowledge along by assisting in public education programs.
- Voice your concern for birds and central Illinois' wild places by participating in conservation efforts.
- Get involved with the Sanctuary Initiative to support the long-range goal of acquiring a local bird sanctuary for public wildlife observation.
- Peoria Audubon is affiliated with both the **National Audubon** and **Illinois Audubon** Societies.
- Peoria Audubon membership includes membership in the **Peoria Academy of Science**.
- Peoria Audubon partners with local and state organizations to further bird and habitat conservation.

Special Note

Peoria Audubon members now have a choice!

Join Peoria Audubon only for \$15.00

OR join or renew with National Audubon (including Peoria Audubon membership) for \$35.00.

The only privileges lost to those who choose to join local Peoria Audubon only is National's quarterly magazine.

Local-only members will still receive the local newsletter and also Peoria Academy of Science's newsletter.

Peoria Audubon Society Membership Form

G66-7XCH

☐ **Local Only** (Peoria Audubon) ... \$15

☐ **Dual** (National & Peoria Audubon)
Regular/Renewal \$35

☐ **Dual Student/Senior** \$15

☐ Local Program Donation \$

☐ Sanctuary Fund Donation \$

Total enclosed \$

Make checks payable to Peoria Audubon Society.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Phone and/or email _____

Peoria Audubon is incorporated in the State of Illinois with 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, making all charitable contributions tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Send your membership form to: Peoria Audubon Society • c/o Greet Princen • 677 East High Point Terrace • Peoria, IL 61614

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

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