

Birds-eye View



Mark your calendars
Saturday Nov. 3
Seed Sale pick-up day

October
November
2007

Conserving
bird habitat
for over
75
years

Feed the Birds



Newsletter of The Peoria Audubon Society . . . Chapter of National Audubon since 1981

Chapter of The Peoria Academy of Science since 1930

www.peoriaaudubon.org

Contact the Peoria Audubon Society at audubon@peoriaaudubon.org

Audubon Calendar...

Membership Meetings:

Peoria Audubon meets at 7:00 on the second Wednesday of every month, September through May (holiday potluck starts earlier) It's a relaxed, friendly evening with an interesting presentation followed by refreshments. Free & open to the public.

October 10, 7:00 PM@ FPNC

The Challenge of Bird Photography

Featured Speaker:
Don Chamberlain of Mindmeld Photography, Decatur, IL

Don says, "I have developed a love for photography and specifically for bird

photography. This show highlights the challenges that one faces when seeking that memorable scene of avian wonder."

Please visit the photo galleries on Don's Web site!

www.decmindmeldphotography.com



and read (or listen to) the transcript of **PBS NewsHour** Elizabeth Brackett's interview. On July 31, Judy and Stephen Packard (also of **Chicago Audubon**) discussed with Elizabeth the alarming rate that Midwest grassland birds are disappearing, and Audubon's efforts to restore and preserve their prairie habitat.

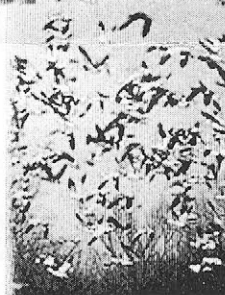
Events & Trips:

Forest Park Nature Center Photography Contest

Categories include Wildlife, Nature Landscape/Scene, Close-up Flora, and Young Shutterbugs. Call 686-3360 for details and an entry form, or stop by FPNC. Entries due Friday, October 19. Photos on display October 26 - Nov. 16



Don't miss the waterfowl on their southern migration



Dr. Pricen's annual fall bird-watching field trip to the wetlands near Canton is **October 27**.

Call Bert at 691-0519 before Oct 23 to **reserve your spot**.

Log onto www.peoriaaudubon.org for more information, and be sure to check out the gallery of photos from last fall's trip!



November 14, 7:00 PM@ FPNC

Illinois Birds of Concern

Featured Speaker:
Judy Pollock, Director of Bird Conservation Audubon Chicago Region

Judy will discuss lessons learned from local bird habitat conservation projects. These birds can find resources in areas that range in size from a backyard to a 20,000 acre prairie. Judy will share management practices for grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, wetlands and backyards including shorebird and migratory landbird habitat.

Learn more about Audubon Chicago Region by visiting:

www.audubon.org/local/chicago

Please take time to visit:

www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/environment/july-dec07/birds_07-31.html



Christmas Bird Counts

Please volunteer your time to help out with this important benchmark of Illinois birdlife. It's a nice way to celebrate the holidays surrounded by the beauty of nature. Beginners are welcome!

Contacts & dates for the individual circles:

Peoria, December 15 - Contact:

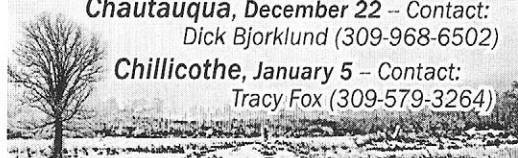
Mike Miller (309-686-3360)

Chautauqua, December 22 - Contact:

Dick Bjorklund (309-968-6502)

Chillicothe, January 5 - Contact:

Tracy Fox (309-579-3264)



A Note from our President



Be a Birder - not just a Birdwatcher

If I am asked about my hobbies, I usually reply "I am a birder". After a puzzled look, the person who asked me often replies,

"you mean you are a bird-watcher"? To that, I will reply "no, not entirely!"

Watching birds is only part of the experience of a birder. I probably use my sense of hearing equally or more than sight to locate and identify birds. Careful listening provides clues about the presence birds. Also, most bird songs are distinctive, and a student of bird song can often positively identify most species without even seeing it!

You probably already know more bird calls than you realize. The mnemonic chickadee, a gobble from a wild turkey, the quack of a mallard duck or honk from the Canada goose are examples of very familiar calls and are widely known.

With a little study, you can tell the difference between the calls of a downy and hairy woodpecker (these species are sometimes tough to tell apart by sight), or a great-horned owl and a barred owl (both usually tough to see during the daytime).

There are plenty of challenges with bird song. For instance, the calls of the Pileated woodpecker and Northern flicker can be very similar - I have trouble distinguishing between them. But, when I hear the call, I already have it narrowed down to *those two* and can use my eyes to do the rest!

There are many resources for learning about bird songs, but one of my favorites is the **Birding by Ear** series of CD's. There are also several individual bird recordings which can be found on the internet.

My favorite Website is Cornell University's, **All About Birds: www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/**

So, if you are not already, I encourage you also to be a birder -

not just a bird watcher!

Pete

Conservation

Congress will need to override White House veto of the Water Resources Development Act

As of this newsletter's October 3 printing, President Bush had not yet vetoed H.R. 1495. This bill, which Peoria Audubon has been supporting and monitoring for the past five years, is an important piece of legislation for **local ecosystem restoration**. Peoria Audubon's Conservation Chair, Maury Brucker, attended Corps of Engineers public hearings as the legislation was taking form over five years ago. Rebuilding seven antiquated locks on the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers was the starting point for local environmentalists' (and Illinois Department of Natural Resources') **ultimate goal of obtaining funds to – finally – restore vital wetland habitat along the Illinois River, including Pekin Lake.**

Over the years, the "Lock and Dam" legislation has evolved and expanded to become part of the *Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)*, which finally was brought to vote and passed by Congress on September 24 by a wide margin, well over the 2/3rd needed to override Bush's expected veto. However, according to April Gromnicki, Director of Ecosystem Restoration in Audubon's Washington office, some members of Congress who voted for the legislation might be reluctant to vote to override the President's veto.

National Audubon has also championed the WRDA, which also provides unprecedented ecosystem restoration funding in areas like the Everglades, the Great Lakes, and coastal Louisiana. National is asking members to take action and **contact their representatives**, urging a veto override. More information about Audubon's **Take Action** initiative can be found at http://audubonaction.org/campaign/wrda_veto

Peoria Audubon will continue to monitor this legislation, and especially the promised funding (1.5 billion) for these important and long-overdue local restoration projects.

Public Meetings give Conservation a voice in land use plans for Peoria County

Peoria Audubon's Conservation Chair, Maury Brucker, recently attended the first public meeting to discuss Peoria County's goals for natural resource and habitat preservation. The second and final meeting – concerning the future of Peoria County's land use in relation to environmental issues – will take place on Thursday, **November 15** at 6:30 pm in the County Board Room at the Peoria County Courthouse. **Please plan to attend!**

Matt Wahl, Planning and Zoning Director, says the Land Use Plan is a basic framework for how growth occurs. The County is asking its citizens to weigh in on updates in the Land Use Plan for the next ten years.

Peoria Audubon is concerned with how Peoria County will zone development in environmentally-sensitive areas. It's especially important to maintain **wildlife corridors** – contiguous areas of habitat that wildlife is free to move through. A second goal is to designate development and urban growth to areas of less environmental importance.

Maury has worked with a collaboration of wildlife groups, agencies, and scientists as they continue research to identify (and ultimately preserve) the area's most essential wildlife corridors. He contends that, with the information gleaned from this study, wildlife corridors in Peoria County can be preserved.



Audubon's Public Policy Office monitors local, national and international conservation issues **Stay informed!** Get monthly updates via email. Sign up at www.audubon.org/campaign

Feed the Birds
& help 2
worthy causes



FRIENDS OF THE ROCK ISLAND TRAIL & PEORIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

2007 Bird Seed Sale & Fundraiser

You'll want to participate in this year's birdseed sale **for three reasons:**

1. **Kelly Seed's** reputation for selling only high-quality birdseed. And the prices you see on the enclosed seed order form are quite competitive, because Kelly's is offering the seed to Peoria Audubon **at their cost.**

2. Peoria Audubon then marks up the seed to regular retail prices. Half the proceeds go to

further Peoria Audubon's mission, and half is given to another very worthy cause – the **Friends of Rock Island Trail.**

3. If you've never fed birds before, this may be the winter you want to start. Bird feeding can benefit birds and also provides great bird watching from your own backyard.

Because of a sudden rise in demand for sunflower oil (thanks to snack food companies like Frito-Lay) sunflower seed prices have been higher this year. Seed prices should stabilize within a few years. Meanwhile,

please continue to feed wild birds during the winter months.

If you're new to backyard bird feeding, consider attending Forest Park Nature Center's **Attracting Birds to Your Backyard** on Saturday, October 20 @1:30 pm

Please copy the enclosed order form and distribute to friends and family who might want to try bird feeding this winter.

This sale is **by pre-order only**, so be sure and order all you'll need for yourself and for gifts, and send in your order form before **October 30.**

Seed Sale Pick-up Day is Saturday, November 3 from 9-11 am in the Kelly Seed parking lot, corner of Washington Street and Hamilton Blvd. in Peoria. For more information, call the Princens at 691-0519.

