

Bird's-eye View



Conserving
bird habitat
for over
80
years

**Spring
2017**

ILLINOIS SPRING BIRD COUNT
SATURDAY MAY 6

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

These are some of the upcoming events listed at

www.peoriaaudubon.org/calendar

Please join us for our monthly meetings at Forest Park Nature Center. Between the months of September and May, we meet the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM.

Wednesday, April 12, 7:00 PM- Membership Meeting-Attracting and Keeping Purple Martins and Bluebirds

Jim Parrott from the local Wild Birds Unlimited will be with us to speak about attracting and keeping purple martins and bluebirds. Learn about what makes a good house, a good habitat, and what is needed to successfully attract these birds.

Saturday, May 6, All Day- Illinois Spring Bird Count

Statewide survey of birds timed to be at the peak of migration. The Peoria Audubon Society organizes teams to participate in the Peoria Area. Contact Mike Miller, 309-681-2858, Peoria County Compiler, for more information and to volunteer.

Wednesday, May 10, 7:00 PM- Membership Meeting- Peru: Its Birds, Sites, and Ancient History

Vern Kleen, retired ornithologist and Past President of the Inland Bird Banding Association, will be with us to share his experience and expertise as a birding tour leader in Peru.

Saturday, May 13, 7:00 AM-9:00 AM- Birding Walk: Cooper Park

Pete Fenner will lead a birding walk through Cooper Park in East Peoria. Meet at the North end of the park at the trail head. Contact Pete at 309-258-5969 for more information.

Check the Peoria Audubon Society Facebook "Events" page for more field trip and birding walk opportunities around the Peoria Area.

A Note from our President

Illinois River Conservation Mosaic

Dennis Endicott

We are fortunate that the Illinois River, which runs through Central Illinois, creates a focal point of beauty, commerce, wildlife, and recreational opportunity. With all the demands being placed on our shared resource, disconnects sometimes exist between local communities regarding the conservation and stewardship needed to maintain, support, and preserve our rivers and wetlands.

With this background, several local conservation partners got together to form the Middle Illinois River Conservation Collaborative (MIRCC). The aim and purpose of this not-yet finalized coalition is to build a stronger, more active constituency for stewardship of the lands and waters of the Middle Illinois River. The process will be to create a conservation mosaic of local, ecologically significant conservation sites that collectively represent the rich diversity of the Illinois River's ecology. By tying together a series of 8-12 sites through public education and conservation programming, the objective of the MIRCC is to grow the number of local residents that understand and participate in local conservation action. This will help strengthen the capacity and ability of our local conservation partners to improve the efficiency of protecting the system with our limited resources through better education and coordination of programs.

Continued Inside

Notes from the President continued

Members of the MIRCC include Peoria Audubon Society along with Illinois Audubon Society, National Audubon Society- Great Lakes, Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy- Illinois, Prairie River Network, Peoria Park District, Chillicothe Park District, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, and The Wetlands Initiative.

So, how will this work? MIRCC partners have identified a series of protected areas that represent key habitat types of the Illinois River. Although these sites are close to Peoria, together they demonstrate differences in habitat types that are noticeable to lay audiences; various stages of ecological restoration; and a diversity of connections to the Illinois River system.

Through the Illinois River Mosaic, a Coordinator will work to establish public tours thereby connecting the sites by explaining why conservation is important to local communities and providing a mechanism of improving public education. One of the goals is to engage local decision makers in understanding the conservation significance of these local sites and the Illinois River system as a whole. The MIRCC will also support partners by hosting and recruiting people for volunteer workdays. By working together and coordinating our actions, we strengthen our collective capacity for sustaining and improving our wondrous resources.

Spring Bird Counts -- Sat. May 6 & Sun. May 7, 2017

Each year, statewide throughout all the counties in Illinois, a Spring Bird Count is held to track bird populations at the state level. The count provides a recreational opportunity to get out in the field and helps provide valuable data on bird populations. Please volunteer your time to help out with this important benchmark of Illinois birdlife. Contacts for the individual county counts are:

Fulton -- Maury Brucker (309) 696-5490 [May 7, 2017]
Mason -- Sig Bjorklund (618) 363-1083 [May 7, 2017]
Peoria -- Mike Miller (309) 681-2858 [May 6, 2017]
Tazewell -- Pete Fenner (309) 258-5969 [May 6, 2017]
Marshall -- Carol Beatty (630) 284-1134 [May 6, 2017]

The Illinois Natural History Survey uses information from this count to help provide a picture of the health of our states natural areas. All are welcome to help in this fun opportunity

Get on our Mailing List!

Get reminders for our monthly meetings and other special events! Send us your e-mail!
Send it to newsletter@peoriaaudubon.org



Go Green!

Do you want to receive the newsletter via e-mail? Let us know! Send us an e-mail and we will send your newsletter via e-mail instead of the post office. Save a stamp, save a tree!

Send your request to

newsletter@peoriaaudubon.org



Birds and Glass: a Fatal Mix

By Donnie R. Dann

In late April, the American Redstart, a small songbird marked with the striking orange and black colors of Halloween candy, leaves his wintering grounds in Venezuela's rainforest and begins a 4000-mile journey to the Lake County Forest Preserve where he was born the previous summer. His purpose is to build a nest, attract a mate, and raise a brood of young, as his kind has done for countless generations. But first he must survive the countless threats he faces during this perilous journey, including storms, predators, a 20-hour 600-mile non-stop flight across the Gulf of Mexico, communication towers, feral and free-roaming house cats, and more. He is almost home, and after flying over the corn and soybean deserts of central Illinois, he arrives in the Chicago metropolitan area. But there he becomes confused by a modern building with extensive glass, where he sees reflections of more sky and some shrubbery, and he flies full speed into a window that he doesn't recognize as a barrier. He is instantly killed.

This is the "thunk" you hear upon awakening early on an otherwise beautiful spring morning. The American Bird Conservancy (abcbirds.org) estimates that every home in the United States kills about two birds a year, and that up to one billion birds a year are killed by collisions with glass.

Does it really matter? There are still plenty of birds out there, right? Wrong. According to the 2016 State of the Birds report (stateofthebirds.org) by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, "one-third of all North American bird species are in urgent need of conservation action." The same report estimates that some species have lost 70% of their continental populations since 1970. And aside from habitat loss, collisions with windows are the second greatest source of human-caused bird mortality.

Birds provide crucial benefits to mankind, including seed dispersal, pollination and insect control, as well as the cheeriness of their morning song. Further, bird-watching is a \$40 billion economic activity. And all of these benefits are in addition to their remarkable beauty which—along with tropical fish—is nature's showpiece. But the benefit of birds to people should not be the measure of their worth any more than the value of the rainforest is tallied by what's on the pharmacy shelf. Birds have their own right to exist!

You can take steps to minimize bird collisions with your windows. Here are some products suitable for homes and office that are recognized and validated to be effective:

- American Bird Conservancy BirdTape: abcbirdtape.org
- Acopian BirdSavers: birdsavers.com
- CollideEscape: collidescape.org
- Feather Friendly: conveniencegroup.com/featherfriendly/feather-friendly
- Solyx® Bird-Safety Film: decorativefilm.com/bird-safety

In addition, communities across North America, including San Francisco, Cook County, Toronto and others, have enacted bird-friendly construction ordinances applicable to new commercial, industrial and multi-families buildings. Encourage your elected officials to pass similar legislation, and make your own homes bird-safe as well.

Thank you! You too, can smile and know you are helping!





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Join the Peoria sister rally for the March for Science in Washington DC on Earth Day, Saturday, April 22, 2017. This is a nonpartisan celebration of science for everyone who values science and the role it plays in our lives. All ages are welcome at the Gateway Building on the Peoria Riverfront at 3:30pm. There will be music, a variety of speakers, and information tables. Please visit the Peoria Rally for Science Facebook page for more and updated information.



Like the Peoria Audubon Society page on Facebook!

