



# The Meadowlark Messenger

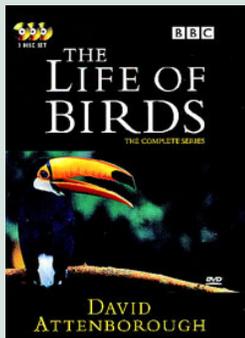
ChampaignCountyAudubon.org

Champaign County Audubon Society • A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

## December Program: BBC's *The Life of Birds*

Thursday, December 7, 7pm  
Urbana Free Library

Warm up with a winter potluck and movie night for our CCAS monthly meeting! Bring a warm sweater and cozy up with some cocoa and popcorn for an episode of the BBC documentary "The Life of Birds." This documentary is a stunning view into the secret lives of some of the worlds most intriguing and exotic birds by those that brought you Blue Planet and Planet Earth.



CCAS will provide popcorn and cocoa but you are welcome to bring a dish or snack to share! All are welcome including non-members! Bring your friends and family! Hope to see you there!

## \$250 Mini-Grants for Educators

*Deadline: February 2*

Our mini-grants provide help to Champaign County educators with bringing environmental education to students. Some suggestions are: classroom equipment, books, guest speakers, outdoor learning areas, field trip costs, professional development, etc. Be creative!



Grants are available to educators within Champaign County only. Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by members of the CCAS Education Committee. The final choices will be made by the our Board of Directors. Only one grant will be awarded to any educator.

If you would like to apply, please fill out the application found on our website.

## *Sponsor a Mini-Grant!*

Your donation of \$250 will provide one mini-grant to a local classroom. Checks can be made out to CCAS and mailed to PO Box 882, Urbana, IL 61803-0882. All donations are tax deductible. Thank you for supporting these valuable education opportunities!

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Champaign County Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 882, Urbana, IL 61803  
ChampaignCountyAudubon.org  
mail@champaigncountyaudubon.org

Officers

- President: Sara Johnson
- Vice President: John Dunkelberger
- Secretary: Charlene Anchor
- Treasurer: Allan Penwell

Members at Large, 2016-2017

- Janet Jokela
- Caitlin Lill
- Jeff Peyton

Members at Large, 2017-2018

- Beth Chato
- Brody Dunn
- Carie Nixon

Committee Chairs

- Bylaws: vacant
- Conservation: Jeff Peyton
- Education: Pam Leiter
- Field Trip: Beth Chato
- Finance: Astrid Berkson
- Hospitality: vacant
- Membership: Brody Dunn
- Nature Shop: Beth Chato
- Program: Sara Johnson
- Publications: vacant
- Publicity: Carie Nixon

Newsletter editor, Webmaster & BirdNotes Listserve Manager: Pam Leiter

Champaign County Audubon publishes *The Meadowlark Messenger* nine times per year. Comments regarding the newsletter, or articles for submission, are welcome.



**Get this newsletter delivered right to your inbox—in color!** Would you like to go paperless and help our funds go further? Please

visit the Newsletter page on our website and enter your name and email address.



**10% discount for CCAS members!**  
Monday–Saturday, 9am–4pm  
Anita Purves Nature Center  
1505 N. Broadway, Urbana, IL

Gifts for all ages! Birdfeeders, binoculars, field guides, coloring books for the adults. Puppets, children’s books, all sorts of small toys, owl pellet and other education kits. Come shop and support environmental education programs.



## Field Notes

*Submitted by: Beth Chato*

Winter finches are arriving. A Red Crossbill was heard at Meadowbrook. A group of about 23 Pine Siskins have been visiting my thistle feeder this week. Juncos and White-throated Sparrows are here as well as Winter Wrens.



Pine Siskin, Alex Galt/USFWS

A late Orange-crowned Warbler was seen in Busey on 11/20, as well as a flock of Snow Geese over Meadowbrook.

Homer Lake had a Red-breasted Nuthatch and a Yellow-rumped Warbler on 10/28.

## Birdnotes Listserve

Join our Birdnotes listserve to get the latest local bird sightings in your inbox!

Here’s how: go to ChampaignCountyAudubon.org and click on ‘Join Birdnotes.’ Enter your info, then click ‘Subscribe.’

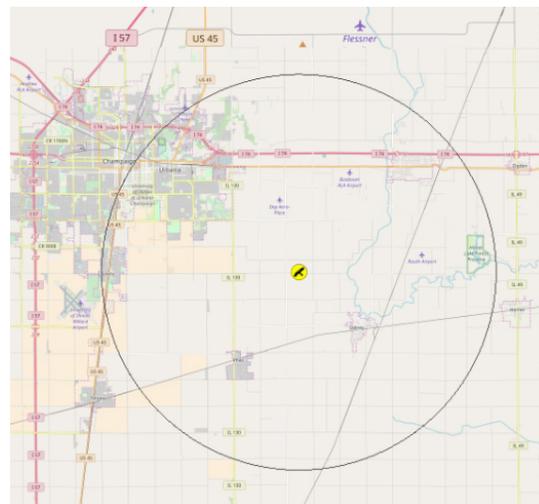
## Champaign County Christmas Bird Count: Saturday Dec 16, 2017

You can add to more than a century of citizen science data by signing up for a Christmas Bird Count (CBC) near you - the 2017-2018 CBC is the 118th annual count!

### Champaign County CBC: Saturday, December 16

Contact Helen Parker at [h-parker@illinois.edu](mailto:h-parker@illinois.edu) if you would like to participate this year. Our count circle is centered at Deers; for practical purposes it goes from Busey Woods to Homer Lake.

All Christmas Bird Counts are conducted between December 14 to January 5, inclusive. Anyone can participate, and you may participate in as many counts as you wish. Just contact the organizer for each count to join their crew. Each team counts every bird they see or hear within a 24-hour period. Beginning birders are welcome; you will be able to join a group that includes at least one experienced birdwatcher. If your home is within the boundaries of a CBC circle, you may stay at home and report the birds that visit your feeder on is count day as long as you have made prior arrangement with that circle's coordinator.



*The Champaign County CBC circle is centered at Deers; for practical purposes it goes from Busey Woods to Homer Lake.*

More information about the Christmas Bird Count can be found at [ChristmasBirdCount.org](http://ChristmasBirdCount.org).

## Conservation Spotlight: East Central Illinois Master Naturalists

*Submitted by: Jeff Peyton*

*We are featuring an ongoing series of monthly spotlights on local conservation organizations to highlight their efforts to preserve our natural resources and habitats. It is a critical time for protecting our natural areas, and we hope to provide concerned readers with information about how they can join the effort, either through volunteering, contributions, or just by taking advantage of the services these organizations provide.*

Are you looking for a way to get involved with conservation efforts and preserving our wild places, while learning more about the natural world and making connections with a community of people dedicated to the same values? If so, the East Central Illinois Master Naturalists (ECIMN) could be just what you're looking for! The Master Naturalists provide opportunities for members to volunteer with conservation projects and to learn about the region's natural history and environmental issues.

Founded in 2005 to promote nature-based community service by citizen volunteers and provide continuing education opportunities, ECIMN is sponsored by the University of Illinois Extension Champaign County, the Champaign County Forest Preserve District, and the Urbana Park District. According to the ECIMN website, the current group of 230 volunteers has contributed over 57,000 hours of service to Central Illinois.

Becoming a Master Naturalist requires no prior training or experience, only a willingness to learn and a desire to commit volunteer hours to conservation efforts. To join the program, new Master Naturalists will attend ten training sessions in the fall and contribute volunteer hours in conservation work or other environmental projects. Members will receive regular notifications of educational and volunteer opportunities in order to maintain their status as Master Naturalists. This is a great way to connect with a network of dedicated volunteers and environmental organizations in your area.

If you are interested in joining or for more information, you can visit the ECIMN website at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/cfiv/mn/> or their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ECIMasterNaturalist>.

## Annual Board Elections

The December program meeting is also the annual CCAS meeting when the membership elects officers and members-at-large. The Nominating Committee respectfully submits the following candidates to fill board positions. Thank you to everyone who has stepped up to serve on the board!

Slate to be voted on:

- President: Sara Johnson
- Vice President: Brody Dunn
- Treasurer: Allan Penwell
- Secretary: Charlene Anchor
- Member at Large 2018-2019: Christina Ruiz
- Member at Large 2018-2019: Janet Jokela

We're excited to introduce two new board candidates! They are both passionate birders and hardworking people who have already attended a few board meetings to get a feel for our board environment. They've both provided us with short bios so you can get to know them.

### **Christina Ruiz bio:**

Christina Ruiz is originally from Puerto Rico and came to Champaign in 2012 for her graduate studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She graduated with a Master's degree in Animal Sciences and now works part-time at the Champaign Public Library. Christina has a passion for the natural environment and that's what led her to travel to Panama to learn about species diversity and environmental conservation as part of her research project.

Christina's first experience birding was in Panama, where she encountered a large variety of previously unknown to her bird species. That experience sparked an interest in birds and their diversity which has grown and endured till this day. She frequently enjoys birding and likes attending the Sunday Morning Bird Walks.

Christina has always had a yearning in her heart for protecting and preserving nature. For her, having the opportunity to become part of the CCAS board of directors is her greatest chance to actively support the preservation and protection of wildlife.

### **Rachel Vinsel bio:**

Hello! My name is Rachel Vinsel. I am from Elwood, IL, but I have recently moved to Monticello, IL with my husband and two cats. My hobbies include birding, running (which sometimes turns into birding), hiking and cooking.

I work with freshwater mollusks and serve as a database manager for the aquatic natural history collections at the Illinois Natural History Survey. Participating in the CCAS Sunday Morning Bird Walks and member field trips has been a lot of fun and improved my bird identification skills.

I am hoping to begin contributing to the CCAS in a more substantive manner as the new membership chair.

# Join Champaign County Audubon Society!

*Yes, I'd like to become a member!*

When you join the Champaign County Audubon Society, 100% of your dues and donations support our efforts (and they're tax deductible!).

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ CCAS Membership (\$15 due each January).

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Additional donation to CCAS

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL**

I am a new member     I am renewing my membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Beginning in 2017, CCAS members will be automatically enrolled to receive our newsletter by e-mail; check this box if you would prefer to receive a **paper** copy.

Checks should be made payable to CCAS. Send this form and your payment to: CCAS Membership Chair, P.O. Box 882, Urbana, IL 61803-0882. Thank you!

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## Join National Audubon Society!

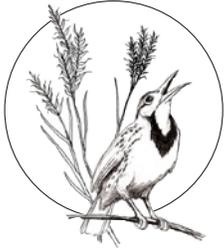
When you join National Audubon Society you receive one year of Audubon magazine. You also have the option to receive local birding and community events delivered to your inbox from CCAS.

- **New members:** Go online to <http://bit.ly/nas-g50> or call 1-844-428-3826. Please tell them Champaign County Audubon Society sent you using our chapter code "G50."
- **Renewing members:** Go online to <http://bit.ly/renew-nas> or call 1-844-428-3826.



**Audubon**

*The Champaign County Audubon Society is a Chapter of National Audubon Society, Inc.*



Champaign County Audubon Society  
PO Box 882  
Urbana, IL 61803-0882

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## Calendar of Events

**Thursday, Dec 7, 7pm**

**Monthly Program: BBC's The Life of Birds**

*Urbana Free Library*

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CCAS will provide popcorn and cocoa but you are welcome to bring a dish or snack to share! All are welcome including non-members! Bring your friends and family! Hope to see you there!

December 9: 9-11am Busey Woods, 1-3pm Weaver Park

**Urbana Park District's Stewardship Days**

Call Anita Purves Nature Center (384-4062) for more info and to register.

**Saturday, December 16**

**Christmas Bird Count: Champaign County**

Contact Helen Parker at [h-parker@illinois.edu](mailto:h-parker@illinois.edu) if you would like to participate.

*Visit our website for more information!*