



# The Meadowlark Messenger

November 2013 • Volume 30, No. 8

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

## Presidents' Column

Susan Stearns

Co-President of Champaign County Audubon Society (CCAS)

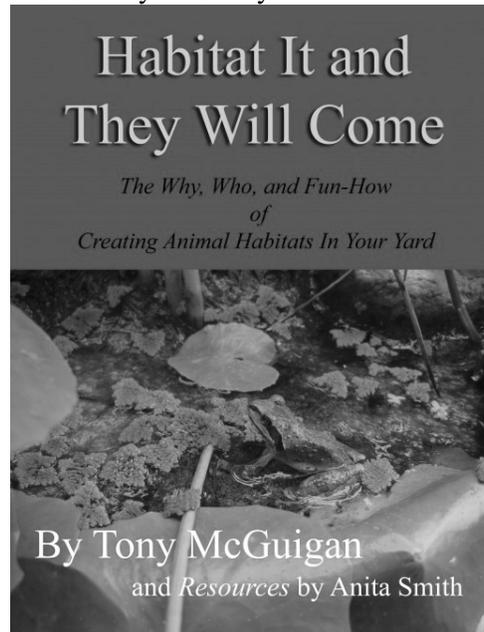
I hope you are taking time to enjoy this fall season. I know I have –although it seems to never be enough. Everyone who attended the September field trip to the CCFPD's Middle Fork River Forest Preserve had a great time. The morning was beautiful and the group saw about 200 birds, of which roughly 100 of them were wading birds. They were also excited to see one of the resident eagles.

We've had so many beautiful days since the writing of my last article. And many things have changed: fields are harvested; trees are showing their fall colors; pumpkins are waiting to be carved; and most of the migratory birds have made their way south. Unfortunately, the weather is getting colder. According to the current weather news, we are expecting a "major cold air outbreak" about the time this newsletter gets mailed to you

With cold weather knocking at our door, it's a perfect time to start planning for next year. Start asking what can be done in the yard to attract more wildlife. Brian and I recently moved to a house with old dying shrubs and a small variety of birds in the neighboring trees. We are definitely thinking about what we can do next year to help our yard attract a larger variety of animals. But we need some ideas. Fortunately, CCAS has arranged the perfect monthly program at Anita Purves Nature Center!

Thursday, November 7th Tony McGuigan will give a multimedia presentation on creating backyard habitats. He comes to us from California and is the author of the book *Habitat It and They Will Come: The Why, Who, and Fun-How of Creating Animal*

*Habitats in Your Yard.* This presentation is a fantastic opportunity to get new ideas for creatively establishing animal habitats in your own yard!

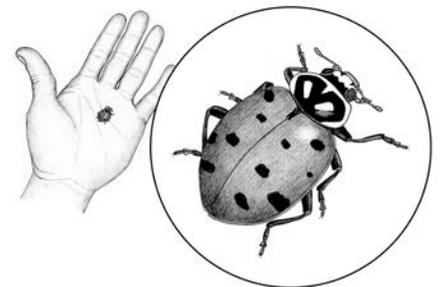


Tony is described as a pragmatic, not a purist, unconventional in his landscaping approach yet has an eye for the aesthetic, a master of reuse and recycling, and a keen observer of nature and nurturer of relationships—animal, plant and human. He holds a Sustainable Landscape Professional Certificate from Sonoma State University and a Permaculture Design Certificate from Regenerative Design Institute.

Please note the change in location for this program. The program will be held at the Anita Purves Nature Center located at 1505 N. Broadway Avenue in Urbana on the north end of Crystal Lake Park. Copies of Tony's book will be available for purchase from the Audubon Nature Store (located at Anita Purves), and Tony will be available for book signing immediately following the program.

I do hope you will be able to join us for this program. As always, thank you

**NOVEMBER MEETING**  
Anita Purves Nature Center  
**Thursday,**  
**November 7, 7 PM**  
**"HABITAT IT and THEY WILL COME"**  
presented by  
**Tony McGuigan**



**Tony McGuigan is author of a beautifully illustrated book by the same title. He will discuss how to create and increase animal habitat in your own backyard.**



for supporting and being part of the Champaign County Audubon Society.

**Champaign County Audubon Society**  
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Champaign County Audubon publishes *The Meadowlark Messenger* nine times per year. Comments regarding the newsletter or articles for submission are welcome by the Co-Presidents.

**Recent Bird Sightings: FIELD NOTES from Beth Chato**

Fall migration is slowing down. Warblers are thinning out; sparrows are arriving as are waterfowl. Weaver Park in Urbana has been a hotspot with Bittern, Soras, and Marsh Wren on October 5, and more recently Le Conte's and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows. Double-crested Cormorants were seen at Kaufman Lake and more recently at the pond by Champaign's Target. Heritage Park had an immature Black Tern October 1. Early Slate-colored Juncos visited a sprinkler in Urbana on September 29. The campus Peregrine Falcon is back. The Sangamon Preserve also had Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow on October 13. Riverbend had 2 eagles and a Bonaparte's Gull on the same day. The Sangamon Preserve list of bird species recorded was only begun in 2008 and now stands at 119. The highest preserve list is for Middle Fork with 249, and the other preserves are also over 200, so Sangamon has room to grow.



**THE LAST SUNDAY MORNING BIRD WALK**

**Sunday, October 27, 7:30 - 9 AM.** Sunday morning bird walks through Crystal Lake Park and Busey Woods began on September 1 and continued every Sunday through October 27. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot. Greg Lambeth will lead.

**NOVEMBER FIELD TRIP**

**Saturday, November 16, 7:30 AM. Clinton Lake.** Greg Lambeth will be leading this trip to Clinton Lake. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center. Contact Greg at <<mailto:gregorylambeth@mac.com>> for questions or if a ride is needed. Bring a picnic lunch. Also dress for weather (can be cold) and wear boots. Target species will include loons, grebes, geese, ducks, raptors and sparrows. Trip will continue to around 3 PM, but some people leave earlier. Also, there will probably be no field trips in December due to several Christmas Bird Counts. Some folks participate in more than one count.

**AUDUBON NATURE SHOP for Unique Nature-Related Gifts**  
ANITA PURVES NATURE CENTER, 1515 NORTH BROADWAY, URBANA, IL  
**9-4 MONDAY-SATURDAY**

**SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & WILDLIFE CONSERVATION**

Nature Shop has a new stock of Folkmanis puppets for the holiday season including eagle, bobcat, coyote and many more - large and small. As always, a good source of nature guides, children's nature books and toys; as well as carefully selected binoculars, DVDs and feeders.

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**Get Your Meadowlark Messenger Delivered Right to Your Inbox!**

Would you like to go paperless and receive your newsletter earlier? You can receive all the information you depend on from this newsletter in your inbox! Please visit our website ([www.champaigncountyaudubon.org](http://www.champaigncountyaudubon.org)) and look under "What's New" for a link to a page where you can enter your email address. (Please be patient with us as we work out the kinks of this system; you may still receive a printed newsletter for a limited time after signing up.)

## CONSERVATION CORNER - Helen Parker, Conservation Chair

It's all about water

Water - it's basic for life. We use it in many ways - we drink it, we clean with (and in) it, we grow our crops with it, we use it in industrial processes, we transport goods on rivers of it. Wildlife also depends on it. Here in Champaign County, we sit on the Mahomet Aquifer, which we tend to think is inexhaustible. Guess what - it's not. While there is a lot of water down there, there is no such thing as an infinite supply.

We have enough for most uses for the foreseeable future, but we cannot expect to keep using it faster than it is replenished. Because there is usually enough rain for our crops, irrigation has been rare here - but some companies are now demanding that farmers have irrigation as a condition of their contracts, and irrigation is a very intensive use of water. Of course, when we have a drought as we had last summer, irrigation becomes necessary for a decent crop. Usually, however, farmers are far more interested in draining excess water than in applying more.

Sometimes we get too much of a good thing. We call this a "flood", and there was a lot of that in some places this past spring. Many homeowners must use "sump pumps" to keep their basements dry. And farmers REALLY want the rain to stop when crops must be harvested.

Water has a property that we don't always appreciate--it is a near universal solvent. Anything that gets into our environment will show up in the water, perhaps in very small amounts, but present. This includes pollutants that we thought had gone away--scientists at the Natural History Survey have found traces of pesticides in river otters. Such things can migrate up the food chain, perhaps to do damage that we cannot now foresee. DO NOT, REPEAT DO NOT dump your used motor oil down the storm drain.

It's migration season. The birds are migrating - look up, and join us on the Sunday morning bird walks. Monarch butterflies are also on their way south - it's awesome to think of an insect flying hundreds of miles! Keep your eyes open.

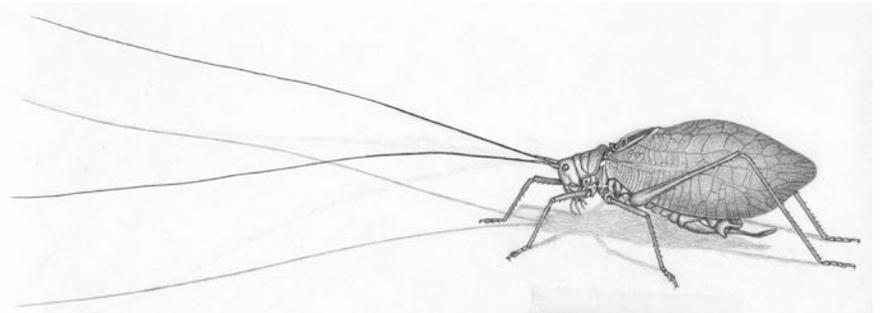
According to an article in the News-Gazette, The rail-trail following the closed CSX line from Urbana to Danville may finally be constructed, as ownership questions seem to have been settled.

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### **The Katydid, after many boisterous nights, are almost silent now.**

*The Katydid, so boisterous last night,  
Clinging, inverted, in uneasy poise,  
Beneath a wheat-blade, has forgotten quite  
If "Katy DID or DIDN'T" make a noise.*

- James Whitcomb Riley



*For a naturalist, the most productive pace is a snail's pace. A large part of his walk is often spent standing still. A mile an hour may well be fast enough. For his goal is different from that of the pedestrian. It is not how far he goes that counts; it is not how fast he goes, it is how much he sees."*

- Edwin Way Teale, *Journey Into Summer*

**Friends of Champaign County Audubon, a reminder:** All local Friends membership fees were due as of January 1. Your contribution of \$15 supports the local Chapter. Please renew or consider signing up on page 5 of this newsletter or send dues and membership information to our membership chair, Janet Jokela, 1701 Gentry Square, #101, Champaign IL 61821.

## Six-Week Public Seminar Series on Fresh Water Availability and Use

### Fresh Water Availability: Confronting the Immense Challenge

**WHY?** Growing human population and accelerating development, along with the uncertainty caused by climate change, are placing increasing pressure on the world's ecosystems. Water is fundamental to all forms of life. Humans use enormous quantities of water for agricultural, industrial, recreational and household purposes. Consequently, fresh water supplies are diminishing. According to a 2013 declaration by over 500 water researchers, the majority of the 9 billion people on Earth will live under the handicap of severely limited fresh water availability within one or two generations.

**WHAT?** Professional experts will cover a range of topics. The first four seminars will address fresh water issues at global, national and local levels; the last two, household best use practices. The seminar dates, topics and speakers are as follows:

**October 6** Global and National Water Availability and Detrimental Practices  
2011 Documentary *Last Call at the Oasis*

**October 13** Central Illinois Water Availability and Laws  
George Roadcap, Hydro-geologist, Illinois State Water Survey

**October 20** Central Illinois Industrial Water Use: I. Coal mining  
*Coal's Impact on clean water in Illinois*  
Traci Barkley, Water Resources Scientist, Prairie Rivers Network

**November 3** Central Illinois Industrial Water Use: II. Agriculture  
*Methods for reducing agricultural nutrients entering rivers and streams*  
George Czapar, Director, Center for Watershed Science, Illinois State Water Survey, Prairie Research Institute, University of Illinois

**November 10** Individual Water Conservation Practices for Work and Home  
*Methods whereby individuals can conserve water indoors and outdoors through behaviors and technology*  
Scott R. Tess, Environmental Sustainability Manager, City of Urbana

**November 17** Individual Storm Water Management Practices  
*From rain barrels to rain gardens-ideas for managing storm water at home*  
Sandra Mason, Horticulture Educator, University of Illinois Extension

**WHERE and WHEN?** Seminars will be held from 10:45 to 11:30 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Urbana, 602 West Green Street

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### The Nominating Committee is putting forward the following slate for our annual meeting and election of officers in December 2013.

**Co-Presidents:** Susan Stearns & Brian Stearns

**Vice President:** Pam Leiter

**Secretary:** Charlene Anchor

**Treasurer:** John Dunkelberger

**Members-at-Large** (2-year terms): Beez Gordon, Janet Jokela, Germaine Light

**Submitted by:** Janet Jokela, Charlene Anchor, Pam Leiter,

Jim Nardi (members of the Nominating Committee)

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**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES :** Join other volunteers and the Urbana Park District (UPD) for **Stewardship Saturdays**. Help collect seeds, remove invasive weeds, plant natives, improve trails and restore the native landscape. Please dress accordingly; gloves, tools and refreshments are provided. Call Anita Purves Nature Center (384-4062) to

notify the UPD you are coming, and so you can be notified if the work session has to be canceled! **Stewardship work days:**

**November 9**      Busey Woods    9-11 am.    Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center  
                         Weaver Park    1 -3 pm.    Turn right into park at entrance on East Main near Smith Road.

# Join Audubon. Yes, I'd like to join! Please enroll me as a member



## Membership for 2013

Friend of Champaign County Audubon Society      \$15.00.....  new       renewal  
(includes CCAS newsletter only)

Friend of CCAS and National Audubon Society      \$35.00.....  new       renewal  
(includes "Audubon" magazine & CCAS newsletter)

My check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed, made **payable to Champaign County Audubon Society (CCAS)**. Your information and NAS contribution will be forwarded to National.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ C3ZG500Z  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ 7XCH  
(Please provide 9-digit zip code)

To receive newsletter electronically, please provide e-mail address:  
Send this application and your check to: Champaign County Audubon Society, Membership Chair, P.O. Box 882, Urbana, IL 61803-0882. Thank you!

**CCAS Member Activities & Benefits:**  
14 Audubon Adventures  
Classrooms  
Mini-grants to educators  
Kendeigh grants for scientific studies  
Great Backyard Bird Count  
Youth Bird Count Day  
Nature Shop at the Nature Center  
Meadowbrook prairie restoration  
Field trips, Annual Bird Counts  
Annual Birdathons  
Monthly member meetings  
Meadowlark Messenger

## Education Corner, Stacey Clementz

Education Program Specialist, Champaign County Forest Preserve District, Homer Lake  
[sclementz@ccfpd.org](mailto:sclementz@ccfpd.org)

### Congratulations Mini-Grant Recipients!

We received so many great mini-grant applications this year and were able to fund five. Contributions from Champaign County Audubon Society members aided us in this effort, including funds from the Edna Arend Memorial Fund (set up in honor of Iris Swanson's mother) and the Helen Ritter Memorial Fund.

This year's recipients are:

- **Danelle LaFoe** with **Next Generation School in Champaign** for flowers for their new science garden center
- **Leslie McClintock** with **Urbana Middle School** for funds to bring the U of I Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic animals to their classroom
- **Geetha Sivaguru** with **Mahomet Seymour Junior High** for funds to visit the Staerkel Planetarium and for a speaker to present to their class about astronomy
- **Karen McHale** with the **Middletown Early Childhood Center in Mahomet** for seeds and soil for their preschool students to understand planting and harvesting produce
- **Amy Kuka** with **Swann School in Champaign** for materials to expose their students to plants and the opportunity to participate in a lifelong-leisure skill.

It is always a privilege to support environmental education projects in this county, and it is exciting to see how many teachers are including it in their classrooms. Thanks again to everyone who helped with mini-grants this year, and to all the educators who applied for funds.



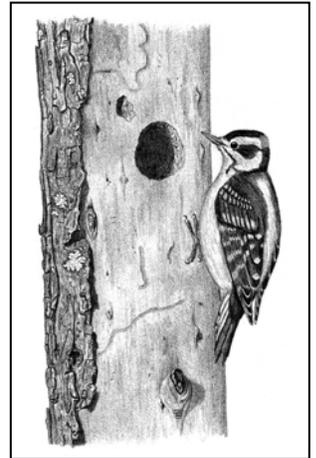
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## Calendar of Events, November 2013

- Sunday** **October 27, 7:30 - 9 AM.** The last Sunday morning bird walk through Crystal Lake Park and Busey Woods. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot. Greg Lambeth will lead.
- Sundays** **November 3 - November 17, 10:45 -11:30 AM, First Presbyterian Church, Urbana. Six-Week Public Seminar Series on Fresh Water Availability and Use.** See details, page 4.
- Thursday** **November 7, 7 PM.** Monthly meeting at Anita Purves Nature Center. Tony McGuigan will present *Habitat It and They Will Come: The Why, Who, and Fun-How of Creating Animal Habitats in Your Yard.*
- Saturday** **November 16, 7:30 AM. Clinton Lake Field Trip.** Greg Lambeth will be leading this trip. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center. Bring a picnic lunch. Also dress for weather (can be cold) and wear boots. Target species will include loons, grebes, geese, ducks, raptors and sparrows. Trip will continue to around 3 PM, but some people leave earlier.
- Thursday** **November 21, 7:15 PM. Champaign County Audubon Society Board Meeting** at Anita Purves Nature Center.

