



The Meadowlark Messenger

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

President's Column

Caroline Mallory & Darin Eastburn
Co-Presidents of Champaign County
Audubon Society (CCAS)

With the cooler temperatures creeping in and some recent rains, signs of the summer heat and drought are starting to fade. I was surprised at how quickly the landscape appeared to recover. Lawns may still have a few dead patches, but they are greening up, and at least look good from a distance. Trees and shrubs that were wilted or scorched are looking much better, and large flushes of mushrooms and other fungi are appearing in areas that were dry with cracked stretches of soil just a month ago. Evidence of the drought may be fading; however, the effects of this summer's weather on wildlife, are likely to linger much longer, maybe for several years.

Because of the drought, less food and water were available for birds, fish, rodents, insects, deer, and many other members of the food chain/ecosystem. Less food for adults resulted in lower reproduction rates for many species, and less food for both adults and young means that many of these animals will be going into the winter without the food reserves that they would normally have sequestered over the summer months. This may lead to increased levels of disease and starvation. Reductions in plant cover in prairies

and forest and water levels in streams and ponds may increase the exposure of some animals to predation, and increase the inter- and intra-species competition for limited habitats and resources as we progress into the winter. Likewise, trees stressed by the summer conditions may die over the winter.

However, as some organisms succumb to the stresses brought on by the drought, opportunities open for others. The death of a tree will eventually provide habitat for woodpeckers and nutrients for fungi. Vegetation that replaced wetlands will act as refuges for young fish when the water levels rise again. Reduced populations of some will mean more food for others next spring. So the cycle of stress and recovery, death and renewal, continues, and in some sense revitalizes the natural environment.

The drought may or may not have been the result of global climate change. However, global warming does increase the incidence of changing weather patterns, and it may be more difficult for systems to recover and adapt if too many stressful events occur too close together. Whether or not you think global climate change is real, it makes sense to reduce our footprint on the environment. We can lend aid through the preservation and restoration of habitat, and by efforts to reduce the negative impacts that we have on our environment.

OCTOBER MEETING
at
Anita Purves Nature Center

Thursday, October 4
7 PM

**Marilyn Campbell, Editor of
Illinois Audubon magazine will
present**

“BIRDS in ART”



Wood engraving by Thomas Bewick
from
A History of British Birds (1797)

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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

Meadowbrook; 9/1 Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Curtis & Staley Rds, later behind the Dairy Barns; 9/4 Broadwinged Hawks, 9/5 Eurasian Collared Dove, Brownfield Woods; 9/11 Sedge Wren, Buffalo Trace; 9/15 huge thrush migration, Forestry, also many Swainson's Thrushes in town the past weeks; 9/16 Marsh Wrens north of town; 9/19 Osprey and Bald Eagle, Homer Lake. Warblers and Vireos passing through, including a Black-throated Blue at Meadowbrook and Connecticut and Mourning in Crystal Lake.

Sunday Morning Bird Walks

September 30 - October 28, 7:30 - 9 AM.

Sunday morning bird walks through Crystal Lake Park and Busey Woods will continue every Sunday through October 28. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot. Bring binoculars if you have them. Audubon members will be present to help beginners.

October Field Trip

Pollinatarium trip on Saturday, October 6, 8:30 AM

Insects and Fall Flowers.

Audubon's annual insect field trip at the U of I Pollinatarium. Insects will be observed outdoors in the surrounding small prairie and woods. Some will be observed through a microscope. Children must be accompanied by adults. Directions: South on Race St. to Windsor Rd. Turn right (west) on Windsor. Staying in the right lane, go a short distance to the small gravel road with the Pollinatarium sign. Turn right again and proceed to the Pollinatarium.

Report on Homer Lake Field Trip, First Day of Autumn.

All of four people took part in the September 22 field trip on what began as a foggy misty morning but ended with cold sunshine and strong winds. Because of the cold wind, small birds were scarce; but it was a great hawk day. The earlier reported Osprey was still there, as well as Cooper's, Red-tailed, Sharp Shinned, and a kettle of 40 or so Broad-winged Hawks. Hundreds of Tree Swallows were still swooping over the lake.



AUDUBON NATURE SHOP

Unique Nature-Related Gifts

ANITA PURVES NATURE CENTER, 1515 NORTH BROADWAY, URBANA, IL
9-4 MONDAY-SATURDAY

SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Fall is here! Check out migrating birds with binoculars from carefully selected stock, including the popular Energy Compact 8x21; a field guide from our wide selection, including the new Crossley ID ; or the New Identifier Ultra that combines songs and pictures of 120 birds. Also available: the excellent DVD on Watching Warblers, many new mini-puppets plus new hand puppets.

CONSERVATION CORNER -- Helen Parker, Conservation Chair

Reprieve for the arctic?

Shell Oil has given up on their plans to drill in the Arctic this season. They had an accident (well south of the Arctic drill site!) that damaged their equipment, so plans for drilling are on hold for this season. This does NOT mean that the area is safe, just that it has gotten a stay of execution. Come spring, the rigs will be back. But maybe, just maybe, the government will come to its senses and deny the permits that are needed.

Politics:

In a rational world, someone who is trying to get elected to public office would present ideas & plans explaining why & how she/he is better than any other candidate. In the world we actually live in, the candidates spend most of their effort on denigrating their opponents, at least on the national level. However, we can do our best to inject some thought into the process. Ask questions--What would you do, Mr. Candidate, to keep the air and water clean? How do you propose to protect endangered species? I'm sure you can think of other, similar questions. And don't forget that while national campaigns get all the attention, local offices actually have the most direct effect on our lives. So don't forget your state representatives or your county boards!

Cranes:

The cranes that will be led by ultra-light from Wisconsin to Florida are scheduled to start their flight September 25--weather permitting. If the weather actually permits, it will be cause for rejoicing, since weather has NOT been our friend this year. But--keep an eye on the sky.

I found it interesting that when Putin staged pictures of himself doing things he thought would put him in a good light with the Russian people, one of his feats was leading cranes in an ultra-light! It shows that Russians like cranes, too. Maybe there is some hope for the world.

Mark the Calendar: National Audubon Convention next year. July 12-15 at Skamani Lodge near Portland, OR.

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I rejoice that there are owls.

“I rejoice that there are owls. Let them do the idiotic and maniacal hooting for men. It is a sound admirably suited to swamps and twilight woods which no day illustrates, suggesting a vast and undeveloped nature which men have not recognized. They represent the stark twilight and unsatisfied thoughts which all have. All day the sun has shown on the surface of some savage swamp, where the double spruce stands hung with usnea lichens, and small hawks circulate above, and the chickadee lisps amid the evergreens, and the partridge and rabbit skulk beneath; and now a more dismal and fitting day dawns, and a different race of creatures awakes to express the meaning of Nature there.”

-Henry David Thoreau

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES Bob Vaiden, Habitat Chair

Help rebuild our shattered environment! 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:**

October 13	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.
October 27	Meadowbrook	9-11 am.	Meet at Race Street parking lot.
	Perkins Road	1 -3 pm.	Meet at Dog Park parking lot on Perkins Road.



Seeking Volunteers!

Please give us a hand with membership duties. Someone is needed to maintain the membership rosters, the e-newsletter list, and print out mailing labels for the monthly newsletter. The estimated time commitment is approximately 2 hours per month. If you are interested, please email Janet Jokela at <mailto:jjokela59@hotmail.com>jjokela59@hotmail.com, or Darin Eastburn at <mailto:eastburn@illinois.edu>eastburn@illinois.edu. Thank you.

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) 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.)*

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

Membership for 2012

		new	renewal
Friend of Champaign County Audubon Society (includes CCAS newsletter only)	\$15.00 _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friend of CCAS and National Audubon Society (includes "Audubon" magazine & CCAS newsletter)	\$35.00 _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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: _____ C2ZG500Z

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ 7XCH

(Please provide 9-digit zip code)

Send this application and your check to: Champaign Co. 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



Grant opportunities

Lake Education Assistance Program

The Lake Education Assistance Program (LEAP), part of an education initiative offered by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, offers up to \$500 for formal and non-formal educators who provide children with lake and lake watershed related educational field trips, seminars/workshops, projects, and activities. Projects and activities must have stated goals and involve the enhanced lake/lake watershed education of teachers, students, organizations and/or the community. Funding will be in the form of reimbursement of documented costs incurred and can be applied to such items as educational materials, scientific equipment, substitute teacher payment, buses/drivers, seminars, workshops, software, and visual materials. The next application deadline is January 31. Only one application per school or organization for each application period will be accepted. For an application visit <http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/conservation/leap.html>.

IDNR Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant

The Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant program can provide funding for you and your students to visit the natural wonders of our state. Teachers may apply for up to \$500 to be used for transportation and substitute teacher costs. Application deadline: January 31, 2013. Instructions and application form at <http://dnr.state.il.us/education/CLASSRM/grants.htm>.



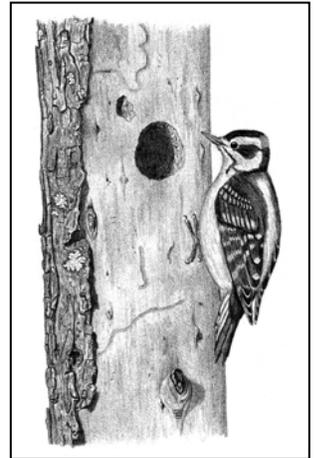
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Calendar of Events, October 2012

- Sundays** **September 30 - October 28, 7:30-9 AM.** Sunday morning bird walks through Crystal Lake Park and Busey Woods that began on September 2 will continue every Sunday through October 28. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot.
- Thursday** **October 4, 7 PM.** General meeting at Anita Purves Nature Center. Marilyn Campbell, editor of *Illinois Audubon* magazine, will present a program on *Birds in Art*.
- Saturday** **October 6, 8:30 AM.** Audubon's annual insect field trip at the U of I Pollinarium. Insects will be observed outdoors in the surrounding small prairie and woods. Some will be observed through a microscope. Children must be accompanied by adults. Directions: South on Race St. to Windsor Rd. Turn right (west) on Windsor. Staying in the right lane, go a short distance to the small gravel road with the Pollinarium sign. Turn right again and proceed to the Pollinarium.
- Thursday** **October 18, 7:15 PM.** Champaign County Audubon Society Board Meeting at Anita Purves Nature Center.

COMING IN NOVEMBER:

- Saturday** **November 3, 7:30 AM,** Annual field trip to Clinton Lake. Meet at The Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot for carpooling.
- Saturday** **November 17,** Annual Sandhill Crane trip to Jasper-Pulaski Wildlife Refuge.

