



# *The Meadowlark Messenger*

October 2013 • Volume 30, No. 7

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

## **Presidents' Column**

Susan Stearns

Co-President of Champaign County Audubon Society (CCAS)

The corn is drying up, soybeans are turning yellow, while leaves on the tall trees are still green. The sun is setting sooner; the temperatures are dropping. You don't know whether to turn on your heat or your air conditioner. Pumpkins and other squash are showing up in abundance at the market. You know what I'm talking about – the first few signs that the fall season is approaching. In my opinion, fall seems to come and go so quickly. I await its arrival with great expectation, looking forward to enjoying its presence for months - only to really notice and appreciate the vibrant colors of the leaves and fresh crispness of the air for just a few days.

The same holds true for fall bird migration. Young birds have fledged. Some are still building their strength to prepare for their first migration south while others are already on their way. The last few years, I've looked forward to the fall bird migration with the same anticipation that I look forward to the fall colors and pumpkin patches, only to find that I've missed it – feeling disappointed.

In reflection, I must ask myself how I keep missing it. Bringing work home on top of working more than 40 hours a week? Too many responsibilities? Too focused on whatever is occupying my mind? Feeling too worn out to take a walk at my favorite park or carve a

at my favorite park or carve a pumpkin for Halloween? Whatever the reason, I find that I have allowed myself to be distracted from enjoying the sights and sounds of fall.

It's time to make a plan - a plan to enjoy the sights and sounds unique to the season. Whether the plan involves long Sunday afternoon drives through the countryside or early evening strolls through a favorite park, fall should not be missed.

To give us all a boost, Champaign County Audubon Society has resumed Sunday morning walks through Busey Woods. Also, Brian Stearns will lead a field trip at the Middle Fork River Forest Preserve just north of Penfield the morning of Saturday, September 28th. From what I've heard, Brian offers a unique perspective on birding at this preserve. Even long-time birders who are familiar with the preserve enjoy a new experience each time they take a tour with Brian. It's an opportunity you don't want to miss.

Whatever responsibilities or events in your life, be sure to make room for enjoying the sights, sounds, and events of the fall season. I'd hate for you to miss it!

As always, thank you for supporting the Champaign County Audubon Society.

**Happy Birding!**

## **OCTOBER MEETING**

Urbana Free Library Auditorium

**Thursday,**

**October 3, 7 PM**

*Water Issues and Waterfowl  
in East Central Illinois*  
presented by Glynnis Collins

Glynnis Collins has been with Prairie Rivers Network since 2005, and became Executive Director in 2008.

If you read the local news, you've heard about many water pollution and water supply concerns here in East Central Illinois: coal mines, PCB landfills, water sales, and more. Why do these issues matter to local birds, especially waterfowl? Come learn about the issues and what you can do to advocate for clean and abundant water.



Drawing by C.F. Tunnicliffe from *Shorelands Summer Diary* (1952).

Champaign County Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 882, Urbana, IL 61803  
217-367-6766  
www.champaigncountyaudubon.org

**Officers**

Co-Presidents: Brian Stearns, 595-5052  
brian@sbstearns.us  
Susan Stearns, 595-5052  
susan@sbstearns.us  
Co-Vice Presidents: Cleo D'Arcy, 344-3639  
cdarcy@uiuc.edu  
Steve D'Arcy, 344-3639  
s-darcy@uiuc.edu  
Secretary: Charlene Anchor, 359-8214,  
charleneanchor@msn.com  
Treasurer: John Dunkelberger  
344-4973, jdunkel@hotmail.com

**Committee Chairs**

Conservation: Helen Parker, 367-3130  
h-parker@illinois.edu  
Education: Stacey Clementz, 896-2455,  
sclementz@ccfpd.org  
Field Trip: Charlene Anchor, 359-8214,  
charleneanchor@msn.com  
Mary Stech, 621-3492  
mkstech@mchsi.com  
Finance: Astrid Berkson  
356-4647, astrid@insightbb.com  
Habitat: Robert Vaiden, 344-9042  
vaiden@isgs.illinois.edu  
Membership: Janet Jokela, 352-3632  
jjokela59@hotmail.com  
Nature Shop: Beth Chato, 344-6803  
ejchato@gmail.com  
Program: Dorothy Neumann, 344-1427  
djneumann07@gmail.com  
Publications: James Nardi, 333-6590  
j-nardi@illinois.edu  
Publicity: Caroline Mallory  
344-2297, mallory.caroline@gmail.com

**Members at Large 2012-2013**

Beez Gordon, 355-3402  
Brian Threlkeld, 384-5164  
[abt5@columbia.edu](mailto:abt5@columbia.edu)  
Mike Iorio, 954-1818  
michael.iorio@yahoo.com

**Members at Large 2013-2014**

Jim Hoyt, 352-6733  
Caitlin Lill, 773-951-4900  
[clkilill@gmail.com](mailto:clkilill@gmail.com)  
Barbara Schleicher, 377-8586  
bschleic@life.illinois.edu

**Newsletter Coordinator:** Ruth Walker,  
328-1530

**Webmaster:** Pam Leiter, 344-9163,  
leiterp@msn.com

**BirdNotes Lister Manager:**  
Dan Olson, 586-4389, dolson@ccfpd.org

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**

Looking back to summer, a pair of Black-crowned Night Herons apparently nested successfully at Kaufman Lake in Champaign. A pair of Sandhill Cranes with an immature was at Heron Park on 8/25. Currently fall migration is in full swing, beginning with shorebirds in late July and early August. A Least Tern was at Lake Shelbyville 8/25, and a Black Tern on the South First Street Pond on 8/24. An early Red-breasted Nuthatch arrived on 8/14. Warblers began arriving around 8/25 and most species have now been seen, including a Mourning Warbler in Greg Lambeth's yard on 9/1. Nighthawks were flying over town on 9/1. Sparrows are now arriving: White-throated, Savannah, and Lincoln's on 9/17.

Fall is a challenging time for bird identification – too many leaves, confusing fall plumages, and no songs. However they are out there, so join us on Sunday morning Busey Woods/Crystal Lake Park walks (7:30 am, Anita Purves Nature Center) to help sort them out.



**SUNDAY MORNING BIRD WALKS**

**October 6- October 27, 7:30 - 9 AM.** Sunday morning bird walks through Crystal Lake Park and Busey Woods began on September 1 and will continue every Sunday through October 27. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot. Greg Lambeth will lead.

**OCTOBER FIELD TRIP**

**Saturday October 26, 7:30 AM. Marilyn Campbell of Illinois Audubon** will be leading a field trip at **Kennekuk Park in Vermilion County**. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center at 7:30 AM in Urbana. Marilyn will be meeting participants at the Kennekuk Visitor Center at 8:30 AM. Kennekuk has a variety of habitats including Lake Mingo, ponds, marsh and wooded trails. Some winter residents should be present.

**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**

Lots of new books and feeders for fall. Get ready for winter. Feed the Birds: New oriole feeders, restocked variety of hummingbird and other feeders. Also a good selection of field guides to birds, wildflowers and more, as well as children's books are available.

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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**  
Oil and Water

We all know that "oil and water don't mix". Yet in our world, they may not mix, but they must co-exist. Water is a necessity of life- all life on our planet depends on it. This has been called a "water planet" because there is a great deal of it; but recent events have shown that when too much water is in the wrong place we have a disaster. Here in Champaign County, we are blessed with the Mahomet aquifer, and we have tended to think that its water supply is unlimited. It's not. And they STILL want to put a PCB disposal site on top of it. Meanwhile, our sanitary district wants to sell treated wastewater to a corporation rather than discharge it to the Salt Fork--which could prove disastrous to the organisms in that stream. In Vermilion County, a coal mine needs water to "wash" its dirty product. That water may partly come from Indiana, but Homer is slated to sell some of the mine's needed water, which may be good economics but might be bad biology/hydrology. I don't know. I DO know that coal tends to be harmful in many ways, and we need to discourage its use as much as possible.

Which leads us to oil. As water is needed for life, oil is needed for our industrial economy. The question is whether to get oil for our industry, we must send it all over the continent in pipelines that will at times leak or spill. (There is no such thing as a foolproof system.) The proposed keystone XL pipeline from Canada to Texas is a project that we may come to regret. It has not yet been approved, but the political pressure is high. And when its oil fouls our water, the politicians who are now insisting on it are unlikely to take responsibility.

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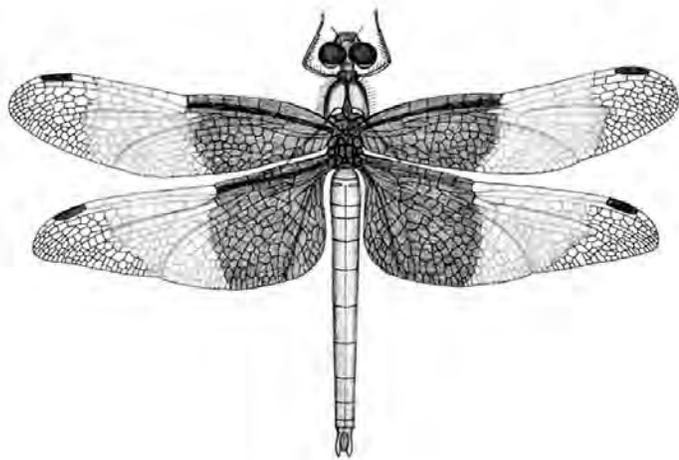
This past week has been "Take a Child Outside" week. I hope that many children did indeed get outside! At least one showed up on last Sunday morning's bird walk. Also, September 28 is designated as "National public lands day". One day is not nearly enough to appreciate our public lands--Parks, forest preserves, state and national forests, etc. Without public lands, very few of us would be able to experience much of our natural world, and we would be poorer.

haiku

floating leaf  
launching pad  
for dragonfly

-Ruth S. Walker, Urbana  
9/08/13

This poem was inspired by the colorful dragonfly photos shown by Brian Stearns at the Audubon potluck on September 5. It was edited and published by Lee Gurga in the *News Gazette* on September 15.



**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 11:00 to 11:45 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Urbana, 602 West Green Street

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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:**

- October 12** 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 26** Meadowbrook 9 -11 am. Meet at Race Street parking lot.  
Perkins Road 1 -3 pm. Meet at Dog Park parking lot on Perkins 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

[sclementz@ccfpd.org](mailto:sclementz@ccfpd.org)

### Soar through the Standards

Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Looking for background information and new activities and lessons that will help you meet the new Next Generation Science Standards? Here's a fun and educational opportunity! This 5-part series is designed to help educators develop content knowledge and discover activities that will bring the NGSS standards alive for their K-12 students. Each one-hour live webinar incorporates graphics, multimedia resources, audience feedback, and Q&A time. Visit <http://www.birdsleuth.org/webinar-series/>

**Webinar 1 - Birds in Your Ecosystem** Birds are diverse, but they all have some things in common. Learn about adaptations that birds have to survive and reproduce in their habitats, and get insight into the roles birds play within ecosystems.

**Webinar 2: Bird Communication: Songs and Calls.** Birds vocalize to keep in touch, attract mates, defend territories and communicate with their families. In this webinar, you'll hear and see sound while discovering activities that will help your students explore the physics of sound and reasons for bird communication. Your eyes (and ears!) will be opened to the world of birds!

**Webinar 3: Migration: Birds on the Move.** Some birds stay in the same area year-round, while others migrate each spring and fall. Explore the costs and benefits to each strategy, learn about the basics of flight and migration, and discover how we know what we know about where and when birds travel.

**Webinar 4: Nesting: Birds Raising Young.** The nesting season presents challenges for both adult birds and their young. You'll learn about the different strategies that birds have for keeping their young safe and healthy, and discover some of the things humans do to help (and hurt) nesting birds.

**Webinar 5: Citizen Science: Next Generation Scientists.** By collecting and contributing simple data about the birds in your area, you and your students can help scientists understand the distribution and abundance of birds and how birds are impacted by habitat changes. This webinar introduces each of the Cornell Lab's citizen science projects and will help you select a project to participate in with your students.



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- Sundays October 6 - November 17, 11:00 -11:45 AM, First Presbyterian Church, Urbana. Six-Week Public Seminar Series on Fresh Water Availability and Use.** See details, page 4.
- Thursday October 17, 7:15 PM. Champaign County Audubon Society Board Meeting** at Anita Purves Nature Center.
- Saturday October 26, 7:30 AM. Marilyn Campbell of Illinois Audubon** will be leading a field trip at **Kennekuk Park in Vermilion County.** Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center at 7:30 AM in Urbana. Marilyn will be meeting participants at the Kennekuk Vistor Center at 8:30 AM. Kennekuk has a variety of habitats including Lake Mingo, ponds, marsh and wooded trails. Some winter residents should be present.

