



The Meadowlark Messenger

November 2010 • Volume 27, No. 8

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

Following His Passion **Cleo and Steve D'Arcy** **Co-Presidents of Champaign County Audubon Society (CCAS)**

Earlier this month we celebrated our anniversary by taking a short trip to Kentucky. We decided that our gifts to each other would be bats – the wooden kind at the Louisville Slugger Factory and the live kind at Mammoth Cave. Both experiences were a lot of fun and highly educational but, as often happens, it was an unplanned stop that made the trip.

We decided to come home by the “slow route,” traveling west through Kentucky on several parkways, then north through Indiana on U.S. 41. When we noticed that we would be passing right by John James Audubon State Park in Henderson, Kentucky, of course, we had to stop. The nearly 700-acre park boasts many facilities, including lakes for boating and fishing, a golf course, cabins for overnight stays, and playgrounds and picnic areas for day visitors. Many of these areas were first developed in the 1930s from what was basically a swamp by approximately 200 members of the Civilian Conservation Corps. With the help of the Works Progress Administration several structures were built, including the park office where you can pick up lists of the birds, wild flowers, and trees, shrubs and ferns found in the park. However, we didn't see much of all this because we spent our time in the John James Audubon Museum and Nature Center.

Audubon lived in Henderson

from 1810 to 1819. Other than the very end of his life, this was the only place where he owned a home. The museum was built in the 1930s in French Norman design to commemorate Audubon's French heritage. The day we were there the staff was busy preparing for a wedding with 200 guests in this lovely setting. The museum collection was a gift from Alice Tyler, the widow of one of Audubon's great-grandsons. The museum opened in 1938, after her collection arrived from the Yale Peabody Museum. In the 1990s the museum was refurbished and a Nature Center added.

The museum has one of the largest collections of original Audubon prints in the world, but what makes it special is the manner in which these prints are integrated into a multi-room display that tells the story of Audubon's life. As you follow the display, you relive his life and begin to feel his passion for the project he had chosen: to create life-size portraits of all the known North American birds.

While the prints, engravings, and portfolios are magnificent, what we took away from the museum was Audubon's life-long struggle to follow his passion. He was a failure as a businessman, occasionally succeeding because of an industrious business partner. He depended heavily on his faithful wife, Lucy, who taught school to supply the family with a steady source of income and raised their children while Audubon travelled around the U.S. and Europe. Even after he was acknowledged as a premier naturalist, he struggled to raise funds to support publication of his work through subscriptions. Some rich and

famous people, including John Jacob Astor, were delinquent in their payments to him.

If you'd like to experience John James Audubon's life, drive down to Henderson, Kentucky some weekend. It's an easy overnight trip, and we think that you'll never again feel the same about the man or about his passion.

November Program at Urbana Free **Library Auditorium** **Thursday, November 4, 7 pm**



*From the Amazon to the
Andes: Why Go Birding in
Ecuador?*

Presented by
Steve Bailey
Avian Ecologist at the
**Illinois Natural History
Survey**

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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 Darin Eastburn

The month of October has been a time of transition in the bird community, with the departure of summer residents, the arrival of winter residents, and waves of fall migrants just passing through. An impressive lineup of warbler species was observed in Crystal Lake Park and Busey Woods over the past few weeks including Blackpoll, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Common Yellowthroat, Magnolia, Northern Parula, Northern Waterthrush; Orange-crowned, Ovenbird, Palm, Nashville, Tennessee, Wilson's, Yellow-rumped, and Yellowthroat Warblers. Other notable species reported include Blue-headed Vireo; Purple Finches; Cedar Waxwings; Dark-eyed Juncos; Field, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows; Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes; Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets; Blue Jay; Brown Creeper; Red-tailed Hawk; and Northern Flickers.

The following species were seen in the Meadowbrook and U of I Forestry area: Black-throated blue, Palm, Nashville, and Yellow-rump Warblers; Field, Chipping, Savanna, Song, Swamp, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows; Dark-eyed Junco; and Eastern Towhee. Several sparrows were also seen in the area surrounding the university swine ponds, including White-crowned, White-throated, Song, Swamp, Savannah, Field, Chipping and Fox Sparrows. Other species reported from the swine ponds area include Indigo Bunting; Mockingbirds; Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets; Eastern Bluebirds; Red-headed Woodpecker; Mallards, Blue-winged Teal, Pintail, Northern Shoveler, and Wood Duck; Yellow-rumped and Palm Warblers; and Cooper's Hawks.

Birders visiting the Heron Pond and Middlefork areas reported viewing both Rusty and Red-winged Blackbirds; Common Grackles; Killdeer; Snipe; Sandhill Cranes; Canada Geese; Eastern Bluebirds; Pied-billed Grebes; Mallards, Blue-winged Teal, and Pintail Ducks; Sedge Wren; Sharp-Shinned and Cooper's Hawks, Kingfisher; Blue Jays; Pileated and Red-headed Woodpeckers; Lincoln's and Swamp Sparrows; Tree Swallows; Sora; Virginia Rail; Northern Waterthrush; Swans; Great Blue Herons; Bald Eagle; Chimney Swifts; Ring-necked Pheasants; Great Horned Owl;

Other birds observed in backyards and the general area include Woodcock, Screech Owl, Peregrine Falcon, Catbird, Chimney Swifts, White-throated Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Goldfinches, White-breasted and Red-breasted Nuthatches. Chimney Swifts typically leave the area around October 15 and do not return for six months. We look forward to seeing them again next spring.

FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, November 6, 10 AM. Annual trip to see the Sandhill Cranes at Jasper-Pulaski Wildlife Refuge in Indiana. We'll meet at the Nature Center parking lot and drive to Willow Slough on the IL-IN border where we eat a picnic lunch; and, if we are lucky, watch some waterfowl. Then we drive on to Jasper-Pulaski to see one of the great wildlife sights in the Midwest--the fall gathering of the Sandhill Cranes. We go first to the main viewing platform (note: there is a handicapped parking lot there for the physically challenged) and watch cranes feed and perhaps dance. We then move on to the secondary viewing area where we watch the cranes come in to roost--staying as long as we can see. When it gets too dark to see more, we return to the cars, listening as more cranes keep flying overhead. We then head towards home, stopping for supper at a restaurant on the way. It's a fun day, so come!

Saturday, November 13, 7:30 AM. Clinton Lake Field Trip. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center. Please contact Greg Lambeth at <gregorylambeth@mac.com> if you have any questions or need a ride for the field trip. Sharing rides is encouraged so that we take only a few cars. Please bring a "picnic lunch" and we will find a spot to eat around noon. There is nowhere to get food around the lake this time of year. The field trip will continue until around 2:00 PM, although we can go a little later if there is interest. Dress warmly and wear boots. Clinton Lake is often very cold this time of year with wind blowing off the water. Sometimes, it is extremely cold. Of course, it might be in the 60's. We will start at the new Salt Creek Wetlands which has been a very good area recently. Target species for the field trip will include loons, grebes, geese, ducks, raptors (including Bald Eagles) and sparrows. There have been some rare and unusual species seen on this field trip in previous years, including Pacific Loon (twice), Saw-whet Owl, Northern Shrike and Snow Bunting.

Become a new Friend or renew your present membership in Champaign County Audubon Society. On January 1, 2009 a new membership policy for Champaign County Audubon Society began: The membership fee of \$15 for the local chapter is due at the beginning of each year. See membership form at the top of page 5. And please indicate if your membership is new or a renewal. Thanks!



CONSERVATION CORNER Helen Parker, Conservation Chair
REPORT FROM ILLINOIS AUDUBON

The Illinois Audubon Society (IAS), of which Champaign County Audubon Society is an affiliate, held its "Fall Gathering" at the Ballard Nature Center in Altamont, Illinois October 15-17. There were field trips and programs; IAS partners with other organizations to achieve more than one group could alone. While at one time, the emphasis of Illinois Audubon was on birds, this has now shifted to saving and preserving land. One of the more unusual acquisitions is a bat cave in southern Illinois. IAS has several sanctuaries that are the focus of membership activities in their areas. One of the most successful activities has been the hummingbird festivals held in several places--Vern Kleen nets and bands hummingbirds, and attendees can hold and release the banded bird. Once you've done this, you're hooked! All in all, my impression is that we are fortunate to be affiliated with an organization doing as much for conservation as Illinois Audubon.

ASH TREE SLAUGHTER BEGINS

The cutting of our ash trees has begun. Some are down; some have the white dots of doom. (There is a white dot on a MAPLE tree in the 200 block of W. Vermont, while the ASH across the street is as yet unmarked. It leads one to wonder). The object of this destruction is to save the ash trees from the emerald ash borer by establishing an ash-free zone to prevent the borer's spread. Will this work? My bet is no, but time will tell.

Nominations for Board Positions of the Champaign County Audubon Society (CCAS) Chapter for the 2011 calendar year.

Submitted by the Nomination Committee on October 21, 2010

Committee Members: Janet Jokela (Chair), Charlene Anchor, Pam Leiter, Jim Nardi

It is the Committee's recommendation that the following people be nominated for CCAS Board positions for the 2011 Calendar Year.

- **Co-Presidents:** Caroline Mallory and Darin Eastburn
- **Vice President:** Beth Chato (current incumbent)
- **Secretary:** John Dunkelberger (current incumbent)
- **Treasurer:** no nominee as yet

Board Members at Large for 2011-2012 terms:

- Charlene Anchor (current incumbent)
- Al Willms

AUDUBON NATURE SHOP

ANITA PURVES NATURE CENTER
1515 NORTH BROADWAY, URBANA

Hours: Mon-Sat 9-4 pm

Champaign County Audubon Chapter's

goals for this shop include providing

1. quality nature oriented merchandise for the community
2. equipment for the birder
3. an ongoing source of funds for conservation and environmental education

**ALL PROCEEDS SUPPORT LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
& WILDLIFE CONSERVATION.**

10% member DISCOUNT

New Items: Audubon Engagement Calendars

Illinois Tree Guide

Cookbook for Illinois Wild Fruit & Berries

Vortex Binoculars



Education Corner

Stacey Clementz, Education Chair (sclementz@ccfpd.org)

Thank you!

Audubon Adventures is an educational kit for use in the classroom. Generous donations from our members allow CCAS to sponsor *Audubon Adventures* kits for local classrooms. This year, 21 area teachers will receive this valuable educational tool.

Thank you so much to everyone who sponsored an *Audubon Adventures* kit!

Check out the 'All About Birds' Website

The "All About Birds" website educates visitors about 585 bird species and bird behavior. It features nest cams, and offers a volunteer project where you can sign up and participate in their research simply by counting and tagging online bird images.

A section on teaching others about birds is useful for educators or those who just want to share their enthusiasm for birds with friends or family members. Especially useful is the bird identification skills section. It lists four keys for identifying birds: Size & Shape, Color Pattern, Behavior, and Habitat. Visit the website at

<<http://www.allaboutbirds.org>>www.allaboutbirds.org

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

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

Membership for 2010

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

Friend of CCAS and National Audubon Society \$35.00 _____
(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: _____ C0ZG500Z

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!

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.)*



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES Bob Vaiden, Habitat Chair

Help rebuild our shattered environment! Join other volunteers and the Urbana Park District for **Stewardship Saturdays**. Help remove invasive weeds, plant natives, improve trails and restore the native landscape. Please dress accordingly; gloves, tools and refreshments are provided.

Stewardship work days:

November 13th: Busey Woods 9 -11 am. Meet at Anita Purves Nature Center
Weaver Park 1 - 3 pm. Pull off Main Street at Smith Road.

November 27th: Meadowbrook 9 -11 am. Meet at Race street parking lot.
Webber Park 1 - 3 pm. Meet at Dog Park parking lot on Perkins Road.



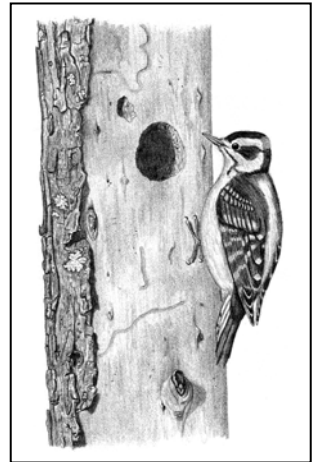
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Calendar of Events, November 2010



- Tuesday** **November 2. Election Day.** Be sure to vote.
- Thursday** **November 4, 7 PM. General meeting** at Urbana Free Library Auditorium. *From the Amazon to the Andes: Why Go Birding in Ecuador?* presented by Steve Bailey, avian ecologist at the Illinois Natural History Survey.
- Saturday** **November 6, 10 AM. Annual trip to see the Sandhill Cranes at Jasper-Pulaski Wildlife Refuge** in Indiana. We'll meet at the Nature Center parking lot and drive to Willow Slough on the IL-IN border where we eat a picnic lunch; and, if we are lucky, watch some waterfowl. Then we drive on to Jasper-Pulaski to see one of the great wildlife sights in the Midwest--the fall gathering of the Sandhill Cranes After viewing the cranes at sunset, we then head towards home, stopping for supper at a restaurant on the way. It's a fun day, so come!
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- Thursday** **November 18, 7:15 PM.** Monthly CCAS Board meeting at Anita Purves Nature Center.