



# 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)

Caroline and I were fortunate enough to attend a professional conference in Hawaii a few weeks ago. Of course we took the opportunity of our visit to do some birding while we were there. Our first task was to obtain an identification guide. We found an excellent field guide to birds of Hawaii published by the Hawaiian Audubon Society. The book not only provided photographs and descriptions of the birds and their habitats, but it indicated when and how the birds arrived in the islands, as many species are not indigenous. Some of the birds we observed were quite familiar - House Sparrows, House Finches, even Northern Cardinals - most of which had been brought to the islands by humans and either officially or unofficially released. Others were completely new to us, including Java Sparrows from Indonesia and Red-crested Cardinals from South America. The cardinals are similar to Northern Cardinals in size and shape, but they are mostly gray in color with a brilliant red face and crest, as the name indicates. The only true native bird we saw was the 'Alae 'Ula or Hawaiian Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus sandvicensis*). This is an endangered species, but relatively easy to observe in the Waimea Valley on the north side of Oahu. We

were disappointed not to see any Nene geese or Honeycreepers, other endemic birds.

The Hawaiian Islands are about 2,400 miles from the nearest land mass, yet there are some species of birds that stop there during migration. Some of these, such as the White and Sooty Terns one would expect, but we were amazed to learn that some species, such as the Canada Goose and Pacific Golden-Plover also migrate to the islands. How does a plover make a trip of 2,400 miles over open water?

It was interesting to see how different birds filled familiar ecological niches. Zebra Doves (a small striped dove with a bluish face) and Common Myna birds were everywhere, especially in urban areas, reminding us of American Robins and Starlings, respectively, while Java Sparrows tended to travel in large flocks and hang out in fruit-bearing trees, similar to Cedar Waxwings. We saw a lot of white birds flying around the beach areas and initially thought they were gulls. However, on closer inspection, we found that they were actually white pigeons. We read that many people are surprised to learn that gulls are rare in Hawaii. Apparently gulls do not have the ability to get rid of excess salt, the way that true sea birds can, and they require bodies of fresh water, something in short supply in the Pacific Ocean.

Of course there were a lot of birds that we did not see. We were really

hoping to see one of the Tropicbird species, with their long tail streamers, or one of the Shearwaters or Honeycreepers. I guess those will have to wait for future visits to the islands.

**SEPTEMBER POTLUCK**  
at the Izaak Walton Cabin at  
Lake of the Woods  
**Thursday, September 1**  
**6:30 PM**



drawing by Charles Tunnicliffe from  
*Mereside Chronicle* (1948)

Please join us for the first monthly meeting of the fall. Bring a friend and up to 10 slides of your trips or special places you visited this past summer. Cold drinks will be provided; **please bring your own table service and a dish to share**. Hope to see you there!

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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**

Highlight of the County breeding season was the pair of Bald Eagles at the Middle Fork Preserve who raised a pair of young. Also at Middle Fork, a pair of Sandhill Cranes were spotted with an immature bird in late summer. Did they nest there? Buffalo Trace at Lake of the Woods had Sedge Wren, Henslow's Sparrow and Blue Grosbeak. Riverbend had Bell's Vireo and Bank Swallows. Weaver Park had a family of Grasshopper Sparrows, and Meadowbrook a Mockingbird. Yellow-billed Cuckoos were numerous, perhaps in pursuit of cicadas. Also lots of Dickcissel were everywhere but at Meadowbrook.

### **SUNDAY MORNING BIRD WALKS**

The Champaign County Audubon Society will be leading Sunday morning bird walks through Crystal Lake Park and Busey Woods starting on Sept. 4th and continuing through Oct. 30th searching for fall migratory birds. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot in Urbana. Time will be 7:30 - 9:00 am. Bring binoculars if you have them.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

**Saturday, September 3. Hummingbird Festival and Pollination Festival at Sugar Grove Nature Center in Funks Grove, McLean County. Meet at Anita Purves Nature Center at 9 a.m.** Festival hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. See hummingbirds being banded by a Master Bander; adopt one; learn about monarch tagging from Master Gardeners. There will be programs, garden tours and hikes. Join members of the Champaign County Audubon Society for this fun trip. Food available to purchase or bring your own. If someone is not able to join us at 9 a.m., she/he could go to the Sugar Grove website

<<http://www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org>>[www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org](http://www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org)> for more information.

**Saturday, September 24. Field trip to Bob Woodyard State Natural Area. Meet at Nature Center at 8:30.** Bring lunch. Near Georgetown in Vermilion County, this site features a heavily forested ravine including a segment of the Little Vermillion River. An old abandoned railway bridge provides a spectacular visit.



## **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**

We can special order your needs. Carefully selected feeders for your birds. Wide selection of bird, and wildflower guides as well as nature books for children.

## CONSERVATION CORNER -- Helen Parker, Conservation Chair

Another summer has gone by in what seems to me to have been an eyeblink. At the beginning of it--late May - early June, I had the great pleasure of attending a session at Hog Island, the Audubon camp on the coast of Maine. This is the area where the Atlantic Puffin has been re-introduced into U.S. waters--the famous (in ornithological circles) "Project Puffin". This visit was a service Elderhostel project--we spent some time censusing gull nests and pulling weeds--but were able to see the coastal seabirds, with black guillimots our daily companions. (Herring and Great Black-backed gulls, in case you are wondering, are major predators of the other seabird's eggs and chicks.) The puffins, I am happy to report, are doing well--in part because Audubon interns maintain a constant presence on the nesting island, which deters the gulls.

We had evening activities, one of which was a lecture on the decimation of the boreal forests, which are the primary nesting grounds for many of "our" spring warblers--but which are being cut to make paper products such as napkins and paper plates as well as newsprint. It was quite enough to make me glad that I mostly use cloth napkins and carry my regular plates to potlucks. (HINT, Hint!)

As usual, our insatiable demand for oil is threatening to cause environmental havoc. There is a lot of petroleum in the Alberta Tar Sands--but it's thick and not exactly ready to use. To get it to refineries in Texas (why Texas? Well they have refineries there.) will require a pipeline that will present a constant risk of rupture and spills--the oil to be sent through it is rather acid and corrosive. Does the company planning to build the pipeline have a good safety record? No.

Oh, yes--the administration has just approved drilling for oil in the Beaufort Sea. That's in the Arctic, in case your geography is weak. No comment.

Governor Quinn signed a measure allowing Knight Hawk Coal Co. to lease a strip of land at the edge of Pyramid State Recreation Area, which will be a staging ground for a 240-acre strip mine just outside the park. The company also plans to dig coal underneath the park itself. Mining could begin next summer if the company can work out a lease agreement with IDNR and obtain the necessary permits. While this project has safeguards protecting the park, we hope that it is not a precedent for future use of state lands that are supposed to be protected.

Get outdoors and enjoy the environment while you can!



### Blue Jays and Autumn Harvests

*Mr. Blue jay, full o' sass,  
In them baseball clothes o' his,  
Sportin' round the orchard jes'  
Like he owned the premises!*

- James Whitcomb Riley

**Special Presentation of the Film *Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time***  
Please join us at The Virginia Theatre in Champaign for a screening of *Green Fire!* The film is presented by the Champaign County Forest Preserve District and the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation.

*Green Fire* is the first full-length, high-definition documentary film ever made about legendary conservationist Aldo Leopold and his environmental legacy. *Green Fire* shares highlights from his extraordinary career, explaining how he shaped conservation and the modern environmental movement. It also illustrates how Leopold's vision of a community that cares about both people and land continues to inform and inspire people across the country and around the world, highlighting modern projects that put Leopold's land ethic in action in a multitude of ways.

Following the film, Professor Eric T. Freyfogle, Max L. Rowe Professor of Law at the University of Illinois, will lead a discussion about Aldo Leopold and the impact that Leopold's conservation ethic has had on the local landscape. Professor Freyfogle has authored or edited various books dealing with issues of humans and nature, including a collection of writings by Aldo Leopold, *For the Health of the Land* (Island Press 1999), which was co-edited by philosopher J. Baird Callicott. Drawing upon history, philosophy, biological sciences, economics, and literature, Freyfogle's work is guided in large part by the conservation teachings of Aldo Leopold, a philosophy that seeks better ways for humans to live on the land.

DATE: Thursday, September 22, 2011

TIME: 7:00 pm

LOCATION: The Virginia Theatre

ADDRESS: 203 W. Park Avenue, Champaign, Illinois

TICKETS: \$10 general admission, \$7 students and senior

(Tickets may be purchased on-line through the Virginia Theatre box office,

<<http://www.thevirginia.org/>>www.thevirginia.org)

MORE INFORMATION: <<http://www.ccfpd.org/greenfirefilm>>www.ccfpd.org/greenfirefilm

Proceeds from the film will be directed to the Forest Preserve District's land acquisition and conservation efforts.

#### **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:**

September 10th:	Busey Woods	9 -11 am.	Meet at Anita Purves Nature Center
	Weaver Park	1 – 3 pm.	Turn right into park at entrance on East Main near Smith Road
September 24th:	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 2011

Friend of Champaign County Audubon Society \$15.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
(includes CCAS newsletter only)

new  renewal

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: \_\_\_\_\_

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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

### Audubon Adventures

Audubon Adventures is an educational kit for use in the classroom. It is a professionally developed nature program, sponsored by the National Audubon Society. It introduces, educates and connects children to the natural environment around them. The program, geared to children in grades 3-6, can be used by classroom teachers, after school program coordinators, special education teachers, language arts teachers and home educators. This year, an all-new edition of Audubon Adventures is being released entitled **Feathers, Fur, Fins, Wings and Water**. This kit will contain four new editions of "Audubon Adventures" and will cover the following themes:

1. Pollinators, including hummingbirds and bees;
2. Wild Alaska: Feathers, Fur, and Fins;
3. Rivers of Life;
4. Action for Planet Earth focusing on ways that young people can make valuable contributions to conservation in their community.

### Interested in a Free Kit?

If you are a teacher in Champaign County and are interested in requesting a kit, contact me at <mailto:sclementz@ccfpd.org>sclementz@ccfpd.org by Sept. 12th. The kit is **free** to you because of our sponsors! *Number of kits available depends on the amount of support we receive.*

For more information on the kit visit <http://education.audubon.org/audubon-adventures>http://education.audubon.org/audubon-adventures.

### Sponsors Needed

Generous donations from our members allow CCAS to sponsor Audubon Adventure kits for local classrooms. If you would like to sponsor a kit for one or more classrooms, please send a check made out to CCAS to PO Box 882, Urbana, IL. 61803. Each kit costs \$38.50. Please have checks in by Sept. 9th.







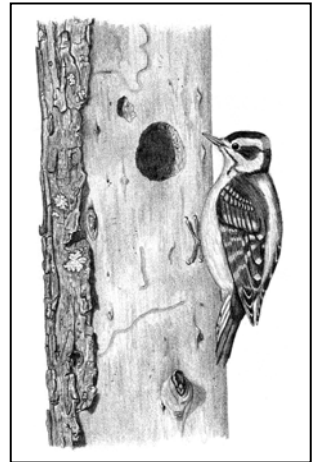
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## Calendar of Events, September 2011

- Thursday**    **September 1, 6:30 PM.** Annual potluck at Izaak Walton Cabin at Lake of the Woods.
- Saturday**    **September 3, 9 AM.** . Hummingbird Festival and Pollination Festival at Sugar Grove Nature Center in Funks Grove, McLean County. Meet at Anita Purves Nature Center.
- Thursday**    **September 15, 7:15 PM.** Champaign County Audubon Society Board Meeting at Anita Purves Nature Center.
- Thursday**    **September 22, 7 PM.** Special Presentation of the Film *Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time* at the Virginia Theatre, Champaign.
- Friday**        **September 23.** First day of Autumn. Fall Equinox 4:05 AM.
- Saturday**    **September 24, 8:30 AM.** Field trip to Bob Woodyard State Natural Area. Meet at Nature Center. Bring lunch.

