



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)

Like many midlife (sounds better than middle-aged) adults, we find ourselves in the position of having some responsibility for the care of our parents. While most adults in the United States are living longer and with better quality of life, old age is often accompanied by chronic illness, disability and reductions in mobility. Sometimes these limitations produce feelings of isolation, loneliness and at the far extreme, depression and withdrawal from society.

What can we do to ensure that our parents' generation continues to have a vibrant social life? Well, one approach is to get them out into the green space. A study conducted by Byoung-Suk Kweon, William C. Sullivan, and Angela R. Wiley at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, suggests that a link exists between the use of green outdoor common spaces and strength of social connections among inner-city dwelling adults aged 64-91. Obviously, parking someone in a park is not enough to ensure improvements in well-being and health; but in our experience every little bit that we do to help our parents be engaged with the greater world is beneficial. We have noticed how our parents breathe more easily, laugh more often, and relax as the sun and wind wash over them.

The green spaces in Champaign-Urbana are accessible to all. The Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District operates an Americans with Disabilities Act, Paratransit Service. We have used the service regularly to visit Meadowbrook and Crystal Lake parks as well as go out for lunch or dinner. The service offers curb-to-curb transportation for persons with disabilities who are unable to use fixed route services. The service is by reservation only, and reservations must be made at least one day prior to service. Potential riders must apply and be registered prior to using this service. Check out their website or call for more information.

Parks and recreation services in Champaign County have undergone major transformations since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Tremendous improvements have been accomplished to promote access for everyone. Accessibility is something we can all appreciate whether navigating a park with a child in a stroller or an adult in a wheelchair. Recently, Champaign County Audubon Society contributed to the accessibility at Busey Woods by improving the walkway from the Anita Purvis Nature Center down to the bridge crossing. These efforts are very much in alignment with our mission to promote a better understanding of nature, habitat, and the conservation of natural resources for the protection of birds and other wildlife. People are much more

likely to understand the importance of preserving green space when they are able to experience it first-hand.

"If the sight of the blue skies fills you with joy, if a blade of grass springing up in the fields has power to move you, if the simple things of nature have a message that you understand, rejoice, for your soul is alive..."

Eleonora Duse 1858-1924

POTLUCK

at the Izaak Walton Cabin at
Lake of the Woods
Thursday, September 6
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 images 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

Time to pick up those binoculars. Shorebirds are here, and warblers are arriving. Sunday Morning Walks start September 2, 7:30 am in Busey/Crystal Lake Park. Summer sightings: OSPREY at Riverbend on 7/4. EAGLE carrying sticks at Riverbend 4/25, successful nest at Middlefork, immature seen at Homer 7/16. UPLAND SANDPIPER young at U/I Observatory site, another seen NW Mahomet 7/12. Quick fly-by by SWALLOW-TAILED KITE, 8/4 at Homer. PEREGRINE FALCON returns to Campus, 8/7.

Breeding Season Notes: There were 101 bird species with some breeding evidence in the County this summer. Homer Lake had 71 species, Lake of Woods 69, Middle Fork 72, Riverbend 64, Sangamon 46, Busey/Crystal Lake Park 55, Meadowbrook 52. The Preserve totals do reflect different amounts of observer time on the different preserves. Please do send me your breeding season sightings to add to these records.

Sunday Morning Bird Walks

September 2 - October 28, 7:30 - 9 AM.

Sunday morning bird walks through Crystal Lake Park and Busey Woods began on September 2 and 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.

September Field Trip

Homer Lake trip on Saturday, September 22. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot for carpooling. Can also meet at the Homer Lake entrance parking lot around 7:45 a.m. Various habitats will be searched looking for fall migrants and anything else of interest.



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.

CONSERVATION CORNER -- Helen Parker, Conservation Chair

Welcome to the world of heat & drought! There are many in the weather service who suspect that what we've had this summer is the "new normal". Nobody is ready to call it "global warming" but on a local scale it might as well be. Wonder what winter will be like?

Bulldog Mine: A problem on our doorstep is the proposed Bulldog Mine on the Champaign-Vermilion County border. This is a coal mine that will probably have a serious impact on our environment. One problem: it will use a lot of water. Vermilion county people are worried about this for obvious reasons. There will be an "Information meeting" Monday, August 27; unfortunately I doubt that you will get this newsletter in time to attend it. With luck more information will be available for the next newsletter.

Wolves: Wolves are having problems. Under Endangered Species protection, they flourished enough to be removed from the Endangered list. This is called success. Problem: They can now be hunted. Wisconsin & Minnesota have declared hunting seasons that will probably permit a kill that will not seriously endanger the populations. Wyoming, however, may be another story. There are a lot of influential people there who regard the only good wolf as a dead wolf. After all the effort to re-introduce wolves to Yellowstone, there is serious worry that these very necessary top predators will be over-hunted, especially since Wyoming will permit hunting from planes--you know, really sporting, fly over your target & go boom! Only time will tell how this will play out in practice.

Another famous bunch of wolves is also in trouble: The Isle Royale population is at its lowest point since record keeping on them began. Nobody knows for sure what the problem is; most likely it's a combination of things. There is debate whether an attempt should be made to introduce new ones to the Island.

Arctic: There is good news and bad news. The good news is that for now there won't be drilling in the National Petroleum Reserve. This is an issue that National Audubon has worked hard on for several years, and it seems their efforts to protect some of the really fragile areas here has born fruit. The bad news is That Shell Oil wants to begin drilling in the Arctic Ocean. This year. Shell does NOT have a good record on obeying regulations and has already shown itself unable to quickly deal with spills.

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



The woods hold not such another gem as the nest of the hummingbird.

The finding of one is an event to date from. It is the next best thing to finding an eagle's nest. I have met with but two, both by chance. One was placed on the horizontal branch of a chestnut-tree, with a solitary green leaf, forming a complete canopy, about an inch and a half above it. The repeated spiteful dartings of the bird past my ears, as I stood under the tree, caused me to suspect that I was intruding upon some one's privacy; and, following it with my eye, I soon saw the nest, which was in process of construction. Adopting my usual tactics of secreting myself near by, I had the satisfaction of seeing the tiny artist at work. It was the female, unassisted by her mate. At intervals of two or three minutes she would appear with a small tuft of some cottony substance in her beak, dart a few times through and around the tree, and alighting quickly in the nest, arrange the material she had brought, using her breast as a model.

The other nest I discovered in a dense forest on the side of a mountain. The sitting bird was disturbed as I passed beneath her. The whirring of her wings arrested my attention, when, after a short pause, I had the good luck to see, through an opening in the leaves, the bird return to her nest, which appeared like a mere wart or excrescence on a small branch. The hummingbird, unlike all others, does not alight upon the nest, but flies into it. She enters it as quick as a flash, but as light as any feather. Two eggs are

Homer Lake Natural Playscape

CCAS helped support the Homer Lake Natural Playscape; please come out to see our 'leaf' and help us celebrate!

YOU'RE INVITED TO THE GRAND OPENING
Natural Playscape
AT HOMER LAKE

Thursday, September 27

5:30 PM

Homer Lake Forest Preserve



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 8th Weaver Park 1 – 3 pm. Turn right into park at entrance on East Main near Smith Road.

September 22nd: 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: jjokela59@hotmail.com, or Darin Eastburn at: 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

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: _____ 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

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. This year, an all-new edition of Audubon Adventures is being released entitled "**Sharing Our Earth**". This kit will contain four new editions of "Audubon Adventures" and will cover the following themes:

1. Share Our Shores
2. Caring For Our Planet-Be a Friend to Birds
3. The World of the Forest
4. Grasslands: A Prairie's Tale

For more information on these kits please visit <http://education.audubon.org/audubon-adventures>.

Interested in a Free Audubon Adventures Kit?

The Champaign County Audubon Society (CCAS) sponsors a limited number of these kits each year so that Champaign County teachers can receive them FREE. If you would like to put your name in for a drawing to receive a kit for your classroom, please contact Stacey Clementz, CCAS Education Chair by SEPT 20, at sclementz@ccfpd.org. Please include: # of kits requested, teacher name(s), school name & address, email addresses, and grade(s) taught.

Audubon Adventure 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 at PO Box 882, Urbana, IL. 61803. Each kit costs \$45.95. Please have checks in by Sept. 14.

\$100 Mini Grants Application Deadline: October 5

Each year, the Champaign County Audubon Society offers mini-grants to educators to support learning about the environment. This year, CCAS has changed its deadline to the fall to help educators incorporate the grant money into the whole school year. Check the Educator's Resources page on our website for more information, or contact Stacey Clementz at 217-896-2455 or sclementz@ccfpd.org.



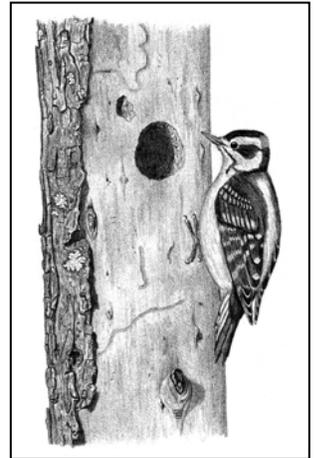
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Calendar of Events, September 2012

- Sundays** **September 2 - October 28, 7:30-9 AM.** Sunday morning bird walks through Crystal Lake Park and Busey Woods begin on September 2 and will continue every Sunday through October 28. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot.
- Thursday** **September 6, 6:30 PM.** Annual September Potluck at Izaak Walton Cabin at Lake of the Woods. Please join us for the first monthly meeting of the fall. Bring a friend and up to 10 images 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.
- Thursday** **September 20, 7:15 PM.** Champaign County Audubon Society Board Meeting at Anita Purves Nature Center.
- Saturday** **September 22, 7 AM.** Field trip to Homer Lake. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot for carpooling. Can also meet at the Homer Lake entrance parking lot around 7:45 a.m. Various habitats will be searched looking for fall migrants and anything else of interest.
- Saturday** **September 22, 9:49 AM.** Autumn begins.

