



The Meadowlark Messenger

September 2013 • Volume 30, No. 6

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

Presidents' Column

Susan Stearns

Co-President of Champaign County
Audubon Society (CCAS)

Have you noticed all the dragonflies lately? Earlier this week I glanced out the window at work. To my surprise, a large dragonfly was hovering over the cars in the parking lot right next to the window.

Dragonflies and damselflies are definitely one of my favorite things about summer.

A few days later, Brian went out to the Middle Fork River Forest Preserve – with his camera. Fortunately for me, he came home with some gorgeous photos of dragonflies! I always like his dragonfly pictures.

I hope some of you have been taking pictures of birds, dragonflies, and the like – and have those digital photos ready to share. CCAS starts each fall off with a potluck and members' slideshow. CCAS will provide the projector and laptop; you just need to bring your photos on a flash drive or a cd (or email them to me at <mailto:susan@sbstearns.us> at least the day before). It's all right if you can't identify the

bird in one of your photos. There will be others who will know and help us all out. It's a great opportunity to have someone identify a bird for you. So, I hope to see you with pictures in hand and a dish to share Thursday, September 5th at Lake of the Woods (Isaac Walton Cabin). And, please remember to bring your own place setting.

Meanwhile, I hope you are looking forward to a fantastic fall with CCAS. We have some great programs planned. As we move towards the end of the year, please be thinking about if you, or someone you know, would be interested in serving as a board member next year. The board currently meets the 3rd Thursday evening of most months. If you are interested in serving or know someone who is, please contact one of our Nominating Committee members: Janet Jokela, Pam Leiter, Charlene Anchor, or Jim Nardi.

As always, thank you for supporting and being a part of the Champaign County Audubon Society.

We wish you happy birding!

SEPTEMBER MEETING POTLUCK

at the Izaak Walton Cabin at
Lake of the Woods

**Thursday,
September 5
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 natural encounters and/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!

Champaign County Audubon Society
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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

Fall migration is beginning: A Red-breasted Nuthatch in Urbana on August 14. Shorebirds are appearing, Semi-palmated Plovers, Least, Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers. Breeding season highlights: An immature Loon at Homer Lake on July 7, a Ruddy Duck on July 8 - both visitors, not breeders. Successful Eagle nest again at Pt. Pleasant and sightings at other preserves. A family of Black-crowned Night Herons was spotted at Kaufman Lake, and sightings were made in other spots. These herons are unusual in our area. A Least Bittern was heard at the Middle Fork Preserve in July. Busey Woods had Barred Owl fledglings and a Cooper's Hawk nest. Henslow's Sparrows were at the Middle Fork Preserve. Missing were any sightings of Bell's Vireos or Willow Flycatchers. Please let me know if you saw any this summer.



SUNDAY MORNING BIRD WALKS

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

SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIPS

Saturday September 7, 8:30 – 10:30 AM. Insect field trip at Meadowbrook Park. Meet at the Race Street parking lot.

Saturday September 28, 7:00 AM. Brian Stearns will be leading a trip to Middle Fork River Preserve in Champaign County. The wetlands of Point Pleasant and the surrounding habitats will be covered. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center.

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

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.

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.)*

CONSERVATION CORNER -- Helen Parker, Conservation Chair CONVENTION REPORT

This year, for the first time in 15 years, the National Audubon Society (NAS) held a national convention. It was in Stevenson, Washington, headquartered at a place called Skanamia Lodge. This is in the Columbia River Gorge, an incredibly beautiful area. There were lectures, "workshops", and field trips; as always at such events, one could not do everything. The attendees were sorted by "flyways" -- NAS has re-organized so that they no longer have "regions". (This makes ornithological sense, if not geographic. The Mississippi flyway, which we are in, is very long, as are the Atlantic, Central, and Pacific.) As far as I could tell, there were only three of us from Illinois, though there were many folks from elsewhere in the flyway. There were around 500 people altogether; I never heard an actual count. The nearest airport was Portland, OR; Portland was also the host chapter.

The "plenary" sessions, which everybody who couldn't think of a good excuse to be elsewhere attended, involved the usual speeches about how great we are and how important Audubon is, yada, yada. The one substantive thing brought out in these was an emphasis on diversity; Audubon is evidently really trying to become more racially & culturally aware. (I had an interesting conversation with a black woman panelist -- I have been at several previous NAS conventions, and this was the first one that I can remember seeing a female of color up on the stage.) Workshops covered assorted topics, including the unveiling of the new "hummingbirds at home" project. I took extensive notes, which I cannot now find. MAYBE I can now use e-bird. A couple of sessions and the Saturday banquet were on the Skanamia lawn, with mountains in the background. A local raptor rehab place brought their birds, so we had up-close-and personal looks at an eagle and assorted hawks and owls.

The most fun, naturally, was the field trips. Again, the hard part was choosing which ones to go on, which was done when registering for the convention (and having chosen, was there space on your choice?). I went on one called "Washington bird specialties", where we went to many places, and other people saw a lot more birds than I did. I did manage to get decent looks at both Western and Mountain Bluebirds, and to photograph a Western Tanager. The other trip was to a California Condor facility, where they are breeding condors for release to the wild. Believe me, a California Condor is a VERY impressive bird--especially when you are standing only a few feet away from it! On the whole, it was an interesting and enjoyable trip. My son wondered if I felt foolish for coming back - well not really; but I'd like to have stayed in the area longer.



"I see some feathers of a Blue Jay scattered along a wood-path, and at length come to the body of the bird. What a neat and delicately ornamented creature, finer than any work of art in a lady's boudoir...."

- Henry David Thoreau,
from *Journal*, 1858

The Jaybird

The Jaybird he's my favorite_
Of all the birds they is!
I think he's quite a stylish sight
In that blue suit of his:
An' when he' lights an' shuts his wings,
His coat's a "cutaway"--
I guess it's only when he sings
You'd know he wuz a jay.

I like to watch him when he's lit
In top of any tree,
'Cause all birds git wite out of it
When he 'lights, an' they see
How proud he act', an' swell an' spread
His chest out more an' more,
An' raise the feathers on his head
Like it's cut pompadore!

- - James Whitcomb Riley

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.

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
(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: _____ 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
Audubon Adventures

sclementz@ccfpd.org

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 World With Birds!"

This kit will contain four new editions of "Audubon Adventures" and will cover the following themes:

- Seabirds: Feathered Ocean Travelers (*starring Project Puffin*)
- Hooray For Hummingbirds!
- Raptors: The Birds of Prey
- Caring For Our Planet: Join in the Action

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 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. 13**, at sclementz@ccfpd.org. Please include: 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 to PO Box 882, Urbana, IL. 61803. Each kit costs \$45.95. Please have checks in by Sept. 11.

\$100 Mini Grants Application Deadline: October 4

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.



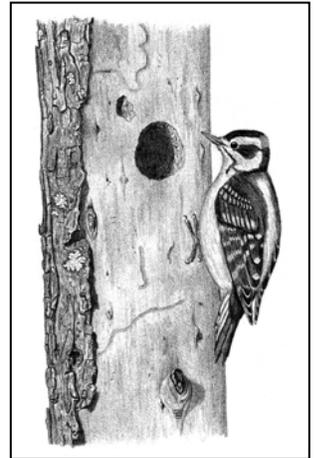
The Meadowlark Messenger

Sept 2013, Vol.30: No.6

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Calendar of Events, September 2013

- Sundays** **September 1- October 27, 7:30 - 9 AM.** Sunday morning bird walks through Crystal Lake Park and Busey Woods begin on September 1 and will continue every Sunday through October 27. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot. Greg Lambeth will lead.
- Thursday** **September 5, 6:30 PM. Annual Potluck at the Izaak Walton Cabin at Lake of the Woods.** Join us for the first monthly meeting of the fall. Bring a friend and up to 10 images of natural encounters and/or special places you visited this past summer. Cold drinks will be provided; **please bring your own table service and a dish to share**
- Saturday** **September 7, 8:30 – 10:30 AM. Insect field trip at Meadowbrook Park.** Meet at the Race Street parking lot.
- Thursday** **September 19, 7:15 PM. Champaign County Audubon Society Board Meeting** at Anita Purves Nature Center.
- Sat.-Sun.** **September 21-29. Take a Child Outside Week. See page 4.**
- Sunday** **September 22. 3:44 PM. Summer ends; autumn begins**
- Saturday** **September 28, 7:00 AM. Brian Stearns will be leading a trip to Middle Fork River Preserve in Champaign County.** The wetlands of Point Pleasant and the surrounding habitats will be covered. Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center.

