



# The Meadowlark Messenger

ChampaignCountyAudubon.org

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

## Bird-a-Thon 2021: The Results Are In!

During our annual Bird-a-Thon fundraiser, teams eagerly search for as many different birds as they can find...and many found more than they did last year! Twenty-five species of warblers were spotted, as were a single lingering Dark-eyed Junco, Pine Siskins, Sandhill Cranes, and several Bald Eagles with nests. Many Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Baltimore Orioles were seen at feeders.

### Team totals:

- Old-timers Vermilion County  
Jim Smith, Beth Chato — 73 species (-1 vs. 2020)
- Urbana Park Rangers & CC Forest Preserve Rangers  
Executive directors and staff — 128 species (+12)
- Homer Hikers  
Peter & Betsy Kuchinke — 65 species (+11)
- The Big Sit  
Helen Parker — 41 species seen from 1 spot (+2)
- Bird Nerds  
Brock Price & Melissa Ricketts — 131 species
- Unpleasant and Hawkward  
Sara Johnson & Matt Candelas — 52 species (-12)

### Thank you to everyone who participated and to our Bird-a-Thon 2021 donors!

Charlene Anchor, Benchmark Computers (Jim Royer), Clark Bullard, Beth Chato, Betsy Kuchinke, Brock Price, Melissa Ricketts, Luke Schneider, Mary Kay Solecki

Donations are still most welcome! Your pledges can be made online at <http://www.champaigncountyaudubon.org/support-us/> or mailed to:

Champaign County Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 882, Urbana, IL 61803-0882



Clockwise from top left: Magnolia Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Baltimore Oriole, Bald Eagles; all by Jeff Bryant.

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## Champaign County Audubon Society

### Officers

- President: Colin Dobson
- Vice President: Roger Digges
- Secretary: Jennifer Wick
- Treasurer: Todd Kinney

### Members at Large

- Beth Chato
- Jeff Peyton
- Zak Sutton
- Tyler Owens
- Megan Skrip

### Committee Chairs

- Bylaws: (vacant)
- Conservation: Jeff Peyton
- Education: Tyler Owens
- Field Trip: Nathan Powazki
- Finance: Janet Jokela (Interim)
- Membership: Sara Johnson
- Program: Alida de Flamingh
- Communications: Sara Johnson, Chair. Megan Skrip (Print Newsletter), Carie Nixon (Community Calendars) Brody Dunn (Board Listserv), Jeff Bryant (Birdnotes Listserv)

Champaign County Audubon publishes *The Meadowlark Messenger* nine times per year. **Comments regarding the newsletter, or articles for submission, are welcome.**

### Contact us!

P.O. Box 882, Urbana, IL 61803  
ChampaignCountyAudubon.org  
mail@champaigncountyaudubon.org

### Get this newsletter in your inbox!

Would you like to go paperless and help our funds go further? Please visit the [Membership](#) page on our website and enter your name and email address.



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## Field Notes

*Nate Powazki, CCAS Field Trip Chair*

The birds are back! Birds that were only being seen occasionally a month ago seem to be everywhere you turn now. Within fifteen minutes of placing oranges on my backyard feeder, I had a pair of Baltimore Orioles eating away. Flocks of Indigo Buntings and American Goldfinches abound, the Dickcissels are singing in the prairies, and if you keep a keen eye and a sharp ear out in the woods, you're likely to see the flashy colors of a tanager, and possibly hear a Yellow-Billed Cuckoo singing in the treetops. On our bird walks, warblers are plentiful, including reports of a Kirtland's Warbler at Busey Woods. On the subject of rare birds, if you visit the Point Pleasant wetland, you might hear, or even catch a glimpse of, a King Rail that has been hanging around the newly flooded wetland. As the state and country continue to lessen restrictions, be on the lookout for announcements regarding potential field trips resuming later this summer! 



*Scarlet Tanager sporting his colors at North Waterfowl area of Middle Fork River Forest Preserve; photo by Nate Powazki.*



*Rose-breasted Grosbeak showing a Downy Woodpecker that he's not the top dog at the feeder anymore! Photo by Nate Powazki.*

# Kendeigh Grant Awardees

Every year, CCAS offers grants (up to \$1,000 each) in honor of S. Charles Kendeigh for ornithology research in Illinois. Thank you to our donors who make these grants possible! And congratulations to this year's awardees:

## **Julianne M. Bozzo**

Master of Science student

Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

*Project Title:* Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*) migration and site fidelity in Illinois

## **Maureen H. Murray, Ph.D.**

Wildlife Disease Ecologist

Lincoln Park Zoo, Urban Wildlife Institute, Chicago

*Project Title:* Effects of feeder type and biodiversity on disease transmission risk at bird feeders

## **Stephanie M. Schmidt**

Master of Science student

Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

*Project Title:* Post-fledging survival and habitat use of the Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*) in Illinois



Least Bittern. Photo by Megan Skrip.



Top: Eastern Meadowlark by Jeff Bryant. Bottom: Three common bird feeder designs, (A) tube, (B) platform, and (C) hopper; courtesy of Maureen Murray.

Since 1982, S. Charles Kendeigh Research Grants have funded over \$30,000 in research on Illinois birds. Many grant recipients have gone on to prestigious careers in the field of natural history.

## **Who was Dr. Kendeigh?**

Dr. S. Charles Kendeigh, eminent ornithologist, was a renowned professor of zoology at the University of Illinois. Before retiring in 1973, he had advised a total of 51 doctoral students and 65 master's students.

He was a charter member, president, and board member of CCAS, president of the Wilson Ornithological Society and the Ecological Society of America, vice president of the American Ornithologists Union (now known as the American Ornithological Society), and co-founder of The Nature Conservancy and Animal Behavior Society.

## Mini-Grants for Educators Awardees

Every year, CCAS offers grants (up to \$250 each) to educators in Champaign County to support environmental education. Thank you to our donors who make these grants possible! And congratulations to this year's awardees:

### **J.W. Eater Junior High**

Contact Person: Ryan Thomas

*Project Title:* Creation of outdoor learning center

Contact Person: Kate Higgs

*Project Title:* Flora for outdoor learning center

Contact Person: Kathy Flanagan

*Project Title:* Artistic creations for outdoor learning center

### **Mahomet-Seymour High School – Biology Dept.**

Contact Person: Emily Waddell-Grider

*Project Title:* Microscopes to help study prairie wildlife

### **Middletown Prairie Elementary**

Contact Person: Heather Jackson

*Project Title:* The very impatient caterpillar

### **St. Andrew's Lutheran Campus Center**

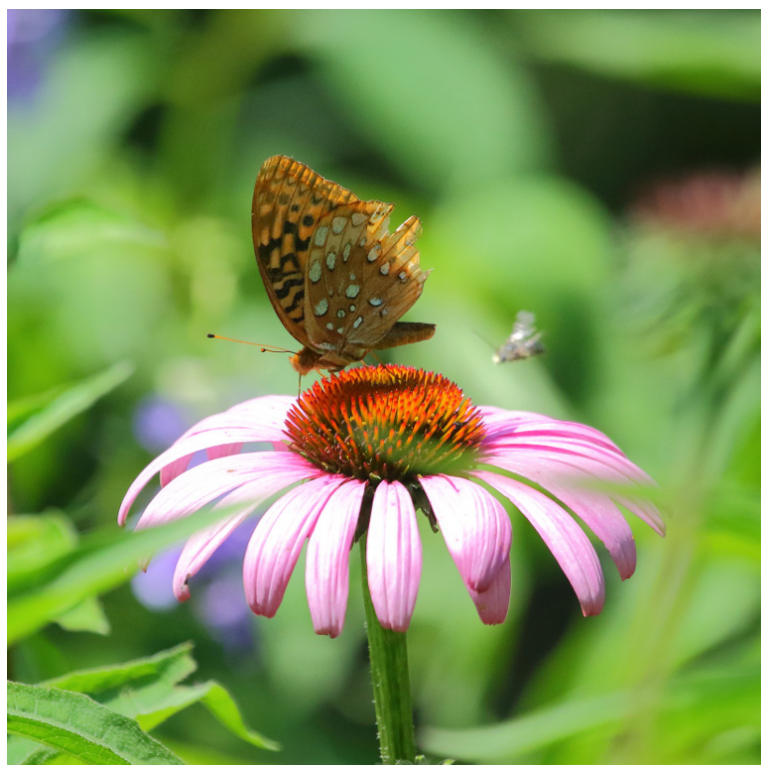
Contact Person: Brendan O'Shaughnessy

*Project Title:* The pocket prairie at St. Andrew's Lutheran Campus Center

### **St. Thomas School**

Contact Person: Betty Kolakowski

*Project Title:* Leveled science readers



Multiple mini-grants this year will support planting native flowering plants to feed native pollinators. Photo by Jeff Bryant.

**THANK YOU**  
to our members and donors!  
You make our research and  
education grants possible.

### **Welcome, New Members!**

*Tyler Hedlund, Robin Kravets,  
Tru Reeves, Zev Steinrock*

**Thank you** to renewing members  
who donated above and beyond  
annual membership dues:

*Astrid Berkson, Robert D. Espeseth,  
Susan Kiddoo, Michelle Ramage*

# Join Champaign County Audubon Society!

*Yes, I'd like to become a member!*

When you join the Champaign County Audubon Society, 100% of your dues and donations support our efforts (and they're tax deductible!).

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ CCAS Membership (\$15 due each January).

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Additional donation to CCAS

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL**

### *Or Join Online!*

Save time by contributing via your mobile device or computer! [Visit our website to join or donate online.](#)

I am a new member     I am renewing my membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

CCAS members will be automatically enrolled to receive our newsletter by email; check this box if you would prefer to receive a **paper** copy.

Checks should be made payable to CCAS. Send this form and your payment to: CCAS Membership Chair, P.O. Box 882, Urbana, IL 61803-0882. Thank you!

### *Our Mission:*

*Promote interest, enjoyment, and understanding of all aspects of our natural environment, and actively encourage the protection of wildlife and native habitats.*



## Join National Audubon Society

When you join National Audubon Society you receive one year of Audubon magazine. You also have the option to receive local birding and community events delivered to your inbox from CCAS.

- **New members:** Go online to <http://bit.ly/nas-g50> or call 1-844-428-3826. Please tell them Champaign County Audubon Society sent you using our chapter code "G50."
- **Renewing members:** Go online to <http://bit.ly/renew-nas> or call 1-844-428-3826.



## Audubon

*The Champaign County Audubon Society is a Chapter of National Audubon Society, Inc.*



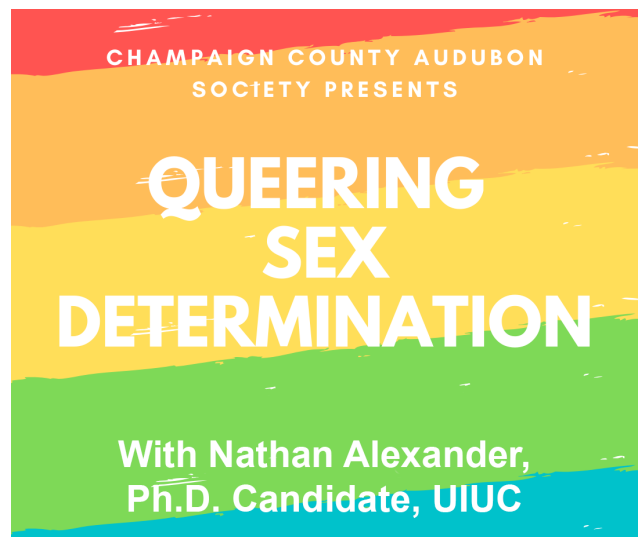
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## June is Pride Month!

We celebrated Pride Month early with our May program, “Queering Sex Determination,” presented by Nathan Alexander, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Illinois. Let’s keep the celebration going!

Check out Nathan’s talk on YouTube ([https://youtu.be/VkJXS0U4\\_ho](https://youtu.be/VkJXS0U4_ho)) to expand your understanding of sex determination to be more inclusive and supportive of intersex and transgender identities and explore the variety and awesomeness of nature!



CCAS does not currently have any events planned for the summer, but this may change. We will post updates on social media and through email news. Remember you can also watch recordings of our past monthly programs on our YouTube channel!