



# The Meadowlark Messenger

ChampaignCountyAudubon.org

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

## CCAS Kendeigh Grant Research Symposium

Thursday, September 2nd, 7pm CT

Join us on [Zoom](#) to learn about the exciting and important conservation research conducted by our Kendeigh Grant Recipients from 2020!

Our three 2020 awardees will each give a short talk about their research and how they used their grants from the generous donations of our CCAS members to this education fund.

To learn more about the Kendeigh Grants and how you can contribute, visit [www.champaigncountyaudubon.org/research-grants](http://www.champaigncountyaudubon.org/research-grants)

To see details about our 2020 awardees' presentations, turn to pg. 3!



All seminars are recorded and posted to our [YouTube channel](#) afterward. Access details and more information can be found on our website: [www.champaigncountyaudubon.org/birdwalks-and-programs](http://www.champaigncountyaudubon.org/birdwalks-and-programs)

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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

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- 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; 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*

It's been another great summer of birding in Champaign County. Although we started the summer on a more somber tone, worried that the mystery avian disease spreading westward would result in mass bird deaths, along with having to take down all our bird feeders, it appears we have been spared!

After the fun of spring and the flashy breeding colors begin to fade, the next exciting bird cycle begins—babies! Like me, I'm sure many of you had lots of nests you observed this summer, whether your own bird houses, or local nests at parks. Every part of the process is inspiring to watch, from start to end. The careful nest building, as prospective parents work to find the perfect combination of nesting materials, to the relentless chirping of the babies, as they beg for food. Whether it's the swallows criss-crossing over Homer Lake, or the House Wren on my back porch hunting in the mulch, they work tirelessly to keep hungry mouths fed. All the hard work pays off when we start seeing the fledglings begin to explore their new world, awkwardly hopping and half-flying, never straying too far from the nest, always under mom's watchful eye.

As fall rapidly approaches, keep an eye out for the birds who nested further north, and their new young, as they begin their journey southward, migrating back to their warm winter homes.

Stay tuned for next month's newsletter, detailing all the great finds during our Emiquon field trip, and I look forward to seeing many of you again as we resume our Fall Sunday Morning Bird Walks shortly. 🐦



*Nesting Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in Crystal Lake Park in 2016. Photo by Jeff Bryant.*

# Kendeigh Grant Speakers

Every year, CCAS offers grants in honor of S. Charles Kendeigh for ornithology research in Illinois. Thank you to our donors who make these grants possible! We are excited to hear from our 2020 awardees at our Kendeigh Grant Research Symposium, September 2nd at 7pm on [Zoom](#).

## *For whom does the male House Wren sing?*

**Rachael DiSciullo**

Ph.D. candidate  
Illinois State University



Rachael's dissertation research is focused on determining which aspects of male House Wren song are shaped by selection pressures from other males and from females. Rachael conducts research in the wild at the ParkLands Merwin Nature Preserve near Lexington, IL, and at the university using a mix of computer work and molecular techniques.

## *Development strategies of songbirds in the incubation period*

**Alex Di Giovanni**

M.S. Graduate  
University of Illinois at  
Urbana-Champaign



Alex received both undergraduate and master's degrees from the University of Illinois. He is most interested in researching life history traits and how they describe a species' behavior. He is now pursuing his Ph.D. at George Mason University, studying Brown-headed Cowbird decision making.

## *Where the cuckoos go: Evidence of long distance movements in Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos*

**Claire Johnson**

Illinois Natural  
History Survey, Prairie  
Research Institute



Claire studied the ecology of Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos at the University of Illinois and completed an M.S. in May 2021. Claire is now excited to now work at the Illinois Natural History Survey, helping with the Critical Trends Assessment Program and looking at the importance of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program in supporting Illinois' birds.

## Upcoming Events

### Sunday Morning Bird Walks

September 5th to October 31st, 7:30–9am

Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot  
**FREE!** All skill levels and ages — under 15 with adult

This fall we have decided not to require sign-ups or limit attendees, but **we do require that all attendees wear face masks**. Do not attend if you feel unwell or were potentially exposed to COVID-19.

Please stay up to date with our website and email notifications for any potential changes/sign-ups, in case of changes in CDC COVID-19 guidelines. Learn more on our website:

[www.champaigncountyaudubon.org/sunday-morning-birdwalks/](http://www.champaigncountyaudubon.org/sunday-morning-birdwalks/)



Black-throated Green Warbler in Sep. 2020. Photo by Jeff Bryant.

### September CCAS Board Meeting

September 20th, 7pm on Zoom

Curious about the CCAS board? All CCAS members are welcome to attend our monthly board meetings! Email [sjohnsonccas@gmail.com](mailto:sjohnsonccas@gmail.com) for connection details.

### October Big Day

October 9th

October Big Day is a day-long celebration of birds and this year it's happening during both International Migratory Bird Day and Global Bird Weekend. Visit the eBird website to learn how to participate:

<https://ebird.org/news/october-big-day-2021>

### November Sandhill Cranes at Jasper-Pulaski

November 6th

Each year we look forward to seeing thousands of cranes at the Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area in Indiana during their autumn migration. Save the date for a field trip currently in the works.



Sandhill Cranes at Jasper-Pulaski. Photo by Jeff Bryant.

# 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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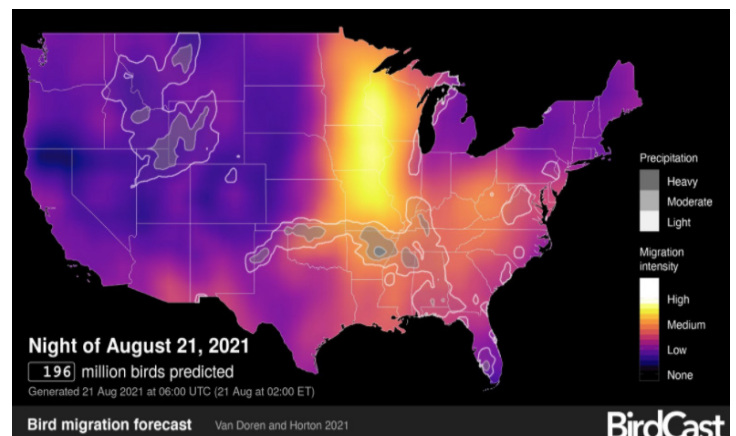
## BirdCast is Back!

Want to get a heads-up on fall migration action as it unfolds? Now through November 15th, visit the BirdCast website to see nightly forecasts of bird migration, live migration maps, and news about weather events that may affect sightings.

Local migration alerts can also tell you whether birds will pass nearby, just by entering the name of a town or city.

BirdCast is produced by a consortium of researchers primarily from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Colorado State University, and UMass Amherst.

Visit: <https://birdcast.info/>



*BirdCast predicts and tracks migration activity across the Lower 48 each night during spring and fall.*