



THE BLUEBIRD

Evansville Audubon Society Newsletter

www.evvaudubon.org

Volume 56 Number 1, Jan-Feb 2025, Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve, 551 N Boeke Rd. Evansville, IN 47711

AS WE WERE...

113 Years of the Evansville Audubon Society

The other day someone inquired, “Just how old is our organization?” The following is a brief overview of the Evansville Audubon Society's history and activities throughout the early years, excerpted from a report by Jenny Medcraft, our former Historian.

The Society was organized in the spring of 1912 by a few enthusiastic bird lovers. There were 41 charter members. In the fall of 1912, Junior Audubon Societies were established in all of the city schools, with encouragement from Miss Faddis, the Assistant Superintendent of Schools, and Miss Lida Edwards, a teacher.

In 1913, the State Society held its annual meeting in Evansville with special guest speaker, Miss Harriet Audubon, a granddaughter of naturalist, John James Audubon. The day's activities included an excursion across the river on the “City of Evansville” (for a fee of \$.50) to Henderson to view the site of Audubon's mill built in 1817. This event gave Evansville Audubon a great deal of publicity and membership grew.

In the years to follow, Society members led frequent hikes and gave talks to women's clubs, scout troops, and schools on the conservation of bird life, and waged a vigorous crusade against the use of birds' feathers as ornamental trimming on hats. The Evansville Public Museum located on First Street, contained an Audubon Memorial Room which had Audubon prints, bird nests, bird eggs and stuffed birds from pioneer days (the Evansville Museum of Arts & Science still had two Audubon prints in 1993 - “Least Bittern and “Pine Swamp Warbler”).

Beginning in 1946, the Society sponsored “The National Audubon Screen Tours”, a series of lectures given by nationally known wildlife speakers and photographers (the sponsorship continued for 26 years until 1972). Roger Tory Peterson was a speaker in 1951.

In 1949, The Society changed its name to the Lida Edwards Audubon Society, in honor of a 73-year retired school teacher who taught first grade at Wheeler and Centennial schools for 44 years. She had been active for years in the Society and had a way of making those who came in contact with her to love nature. During the 1950's, the Society gave scholarships to students for outstanding science work.

In 1967 the Society, with the Junior League of Evansville and in cooperation with the National Audubon Society, took part in a survey to plan for a nature center at Wesselman Park. In 1969, the Society donated \$1,000 in support of the proposed Nature Center, with more financial assistance provided annually. Also, in 1969 the Society began printing a monthly newsletter.

In 1971, The Society became a Chapter of the National Audubon Society, officially changing its name back to the Evansville Audubon Society, the name by which the club was known when first formed 59 years earlier. During the 1970's, the Society began to hold regular meetings and programs at the new Wesselman Park Nature Center.

...To be continued in the Mar-April Newsletter

I hope you have enjoyed this brief overview on the early history and activities of the Evansville Audubon Society. There have been many, many members who have volunteered a lot of their time and effort to make the many projects and field trips successful and who made the Society what it is today. If anyone is interested in seeing the scrapbooks of the Society's history, please let me know.

Sue Vernier, President

PROGRAMS

Programs are on the third Tuesday of every other month beginning in September at Wesselman Woods Nature Center at 6 PM (central time) and are free and open to the public. Any last minute changes will be posted on our Facebook page, Website, and via email.

Jan. 21, 2025 -- "Update on the Chasing Melody Wood Thrush Motus Tagging and other Indiana Audubon Projects", presented by Brad Bumgardner, Executive Director of Indiana Audubon. Find out how Evansville Audubon's "adopted" Wood Thrush is faring in the Chasing Melody Indiana Wood Thrush Conservation Project. **ZOOM ONLY program.**

Mar. 18, 2025 -- "On the Hunt for Hummingbirds in Arizona and New Mexico", presented by Richard and Sue Vernier, birders and photographers. Follow the Verniers as they visit the Arizona and New Mexico hot spots to bag (with cameras) their birds.

May 20, 2025 -- Program TBA, presented by nature photographer Bill Vieth.

FIELD TRIP:

Saturday, February 1, 2025 at 6:30 AM -- Kentucky Dams Trip

Join Evansville Audubon for our yearly visit to the 'Land Between the Lakes' Dams area in search of waterfowl, raptors, and gull species. We will meet at the Columbia outlet store on the strip in Henderson, KY at 6:30 AM and carpool/caravan to the area. This trip should take 6 to 8 hours. Please dress accordingly.

For more information, contact Bob Meier, Field Trips Chair, birderbob68@yahoo.com



Pelicans Photo by Bob Meier

Mark Your Calendars – GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT – February 14 – 17, 2025

Participating is easy, fun to do alone or with others, and can be done anywhere you find birds. Here's how to participate:

Step 1: Decide where you will watch birds.

Step 2: Watch birds for 15 minutes or more, at least once over the four days, February 14 – 17, 2025.

Step 3: Identify all the birds you see or hear within your planned time/location and use the best tool for sharing your bird sightings:

- If you are a beginning bird admirer and new to bird identification, try using the Merlin Bird ID app to tell what birds you are seeing or hearing.
- If you have participated in the count before and want to record numbers of birds, try the eBird Mobile app or enter your bird list on the eBird website (desktop/laptop).

By submitting your counts, you help scientists better understand and protect birds around the world.

THANK YOU!....

To the following members and supporters who have responded to our annual donation appeal since our last report in November. Your response ensures our continued outreach to the community with our education and conservation projects.

Debra Wozniak	Dan and Beth Edwards	Niles Rosenquist
Luan Greubel	Jeff and Marcia Helfrich	Susan Moore
Bill Vieth	Ana and Ted Stransky	Andrew Thieneman
Linda Wambach	Donna Mayes	

If you have not yet contributed, it's never too late. Just make your check out to Evansville Audubon Society and mail to: Evansville Audubon Society, 551 N. Boeke Rd., Evansville, IN 47711.

EAS has adopted a Motus-tagged Wood Thrush to track

Certificate of Adoption

Indiana Audubon Chasing Melody Project

Presented to:

Evansville Audubon Society



Wood Thrush Federal Band No. 8061-02818
Banding Date: June 11, 2024
Location: Hovey Lake FWA
Posey County
Age: Second Year Sex: Male
Motus Tag ID: 88757



<https://motus.org/data/project?id=788>

EAS has adopted a Wood Thrush through the Chasing Melody Indiana Wood Thrush Conservation Project. The adoption of our bird, along with many other similar adoptions, will help to advance our understanding of the migration patterns, longevity, and population trends of a bird of conservation concern.

Our bird was banded at Hovey Lake FWA on June 11, 2024 with a tag ID of 88757. To track our bird you can scan the QR code provided to the left (or go to <https://motus.org/data/project?id=788>) Tap or click the table link next to the number of available tags registered for this project, then search for your Motus tag ID. Motus stations may only download data seasonally, so real time updates may not always be available. Please note that EAS has a program scheduled for September 17, 2024 where the Chasing Melody Project will be discussed.

UPDATE: EAS's ADOPTED WOOD THRUSH left Hovey Lake FWA and arrived in Veracruz, Mexico as of 10/18/24!

POLICY WINS FOR BIRDS AND PEOPLE IN 2024

From the National Audubon Advisory

Throughout the last year, Audubon advocated for bird conservation, ecosystem restoration, clean air and water, and more. Read on for some of the successes.

Protected Vital Public Lands Across Alaska and the Arctic

Audubon Alaska and Audubon's Public Lands team secured important wins in 2024, including preventing the permitting to construct Ambler Road, a mining road that would cut through the Brooks Range.

Secured 10,000 Acre-feet of Water to Benefit Great Salt Lake, Communities and Birds

Great Salt Lake will benefit from 10,000 additional acre-feet of water thanks to a partnership between the National Audubon Society and The Nature Conservancy – as co-managers of the Great Salt Lake Watershed Enhancement Trust – in partnership with Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands. This innovative late season water release will deliver new water to Great Salt Lake, its wetlands, the Jordan River, and Utah communities, as well as protect the habitats for millions of birds that rely on it.

Led a Successful Campaign to Expand Protections for Undeveloped Coastal Lands

After years of Audubon advocacy to defend and expand the Coastal Barrier Resources System, Congress passed the Strengthening Coastal Communities Act this fall and sent it to the President's desk. Expanding on a decades-old bipartisan law that removes federal spending in vulnerable beaches, islands, and wetlands, this bill adds over a quarter-million acres of undeveloped coast to the protected system in nine states that were hardest hit by Hurricane Sandy and other vulnerable states in the Southeast.

Secured Policy Win for Wetlands in California

Audubon California and its supporters were key to passage of AB 2875 to protect California's wetlands following the rollback of federal protections under a Supreme Court decision last year. The court's ruling in *Sackett vs EPA* redefined the federal scope of wetlands, removing protections for many streams that do not flow year-round. This left ephemeral streams, which flow only seasonally, vulnerable to development and pollution. Co-sponsored by Audubon California, the bill establishes a policy of “no net loss” of wetlands in the state.

Secured Funding for Everglades Restoration

In October, the Army Corps of Engineers announced three new contract awards to build critical restoration projects that continue the decades-long work to restore America's Everglades.

Helped Get a Colorado Wetland Law Passed

Audubon Rockies provided extensive guidance and support for a Colorado law that addressed the gap in wetland and stream protection created by *Sackett vs EPA*, making Colorado the first state in the nation to do so.

Evansville Audubon Society Minutes November 19, 2024

Program: at 6:00 PM – Don Batema, retired professor at UE, gave a presentation on “Odonata of the Patoka River NWR & MA”. Don gave a very informative presentation on an important group of organisms that inhabit these wetland areas are the Odonata, namely damselflies and dragonflies. He discussed how Odonata play vital roles as predators and prey, are important bioindicators of ecosystem health, and are of conservation concern in wetland and aquatic habitats. He talked about a study conducted with a student to document what species occur on the Refuge, with an emphasis on locating rare, threatened, and endangered species.

The business meeting convened at 6:50pm at Wesselman Woods Nature Center. A quorum was present with seven board members - Brian Taylor, Richard Vernier, Sue Vernier, Jeremy Ross, Niles Rosenquist, Jim Kimsey and Pam Kimsey.

Minutes: The September 2024 annual meeting minutes were approved.

Treasurer's report: Richard Vernier gave the treasurer's report as of 10/31/2024.

Income of \$0.02, interest

Expenses of \$0.00

Current checking balance is \$5,833.89.

Checking account without the reserve account balances is \$4,303.89

Reserve account balances

Education & Conservation	\$1,250
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Jr. Birders	\$280.00
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Memorials	<u>\$0.00</u>
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Total	\$1,530.00
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Other Accounts

Bulk mail	\$0.00
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Savings	\$5.09
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CD 14 month at 4.85%	<u>\$3,492.05</u>
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Total	\$3,497.14
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Committee Reports:

Field Trips- Bob Meier reported by email that the October 12th Big Sit from 6am to 8:30am at Cane Ridge was a nice turnout. Nine people joined. They had 44 species, including several bald eagles and a peregrine falcon fly over. There were seven shorebird species and seven waterfowl species. The next trip will be the Owl Prowl coming up on Sunday the 8th.

Programs- The January 21st program will be a wood thrush project update presented by Brad Bumgardner via ZOOM only.

Junior Birders- No update.

Advocacy- Members were asked to contact their Senators and Representatives for concern about the funding for the Patoka River NWR and other refuges around the country. Niles Rosenquist will be attending the Evansville Climate Collaborative Roundtable on November 20th.

Education and Conservation Grants- Sue Vernier presented grant requests under new business.

Events – No update

Media/Marketing- Brian Taylor gave an update on the email newsletter delivery rates.

Christmas Bird Counts –

- **Western Gibson CBC, Saturday Dec 14th, Dan Collins dancollinspest@gmail.com**
- **Posey CBC, Saturday Jan 4th, Jared Emmack jemmack@dnr.in.gov**
- **Vanderburgh CBC, Saturday December 21st, Jacob Scheller jscheller@warrick.k12.in.us**
- **Oakland City CBC, Monday December 30th, Heath Hamilton heath_hamilton@fws.gov**
- **Warrick CBC, Sunday December 22nd, Jacob Scheller jscheller@warrick.k12.in.us**

Old Business : Sue Vernier reported there is still a vacancy for the program chair.

New Business:

Sue Vernier presented three education/conservation grants for consideration. 1) Susan Fowler, our Audubon Ambassador requested \$800 for 10, 45-minute outreach programs for schools. 2) Patchwork Central requested \$500 to fund their Summer Arts & Smarts Programs. 3) Michelle Adams-Smith from Tekoppel Elementary School for their classroom birding project. Brian Taylor made a motion to fund the projects. Niles Rosenquist seconded, and the motion carried.

A Collaborative Grant application was submitted to National Audubon for \$560 to fund MOTUS tagging for one wood thrush in 2025. A wood thrush model with a similar tag example was sent to us and put on display so members could see the approximate size.

Items from the floor: Members shared various bird sightings.

It was also reported that the EAS adopted wood thrush left Hovey Lake FWA and arrived in Veracruz, Mexico as of 10/18/2024.

Meeting adjourned at about 7:40pm

Submitted by Brian Taylor, Secretary

Evansville Audubon Society
551 North Boeke Rd.
Evansville, IN 47711

The mission of the Evansville Audubon Society is to promote the awareness of and appreciation for birds and other wildlife and their habitats through education and conservation.

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Visit our website at: www.evvaudubon.org Or Facebook:
www.facebook.com/evvaudubon

To receive newsletters & notices of EAS activities:
Go to our website at <https://www.evvaudubon.org>
and sign up at the bottom of the page, or send your email address to
info@evvaudubon.org

Not an Evansville Audubon Society member? Join now and become a member of the National Audubon Society as well. **Current members** may renew directly with National Audubon Society at www.audubon.org.

Chapter Code H03

\$20 minimum membership includes one year of the award-winning Audubon magazine

My check enclosed made payable to:
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
Mail to:
EAS Treasurer
c/o Evansville Audubon Society
551 North Boeke Rd.
Evansville, IN 47711

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email (to Receive Newsletters & Notices of EAS Activities):
