



THE BLUEBIRD

Evansville Audubon Society Newsletter

www.evvaudubon.org

Volume 55 Number 2, Nov-Dec 2024, Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve, 551 N Boeke Rd. Evansville, IN 47711

*Please Support Evansville Audubon in
this Season of Giving!*

Dear Evansville Audubon Society Supporters and Friends,

Last year, in addition to funding our usual recipients of our education and conservation grants to provide outreach to those who might otherwise never experience the wonder and appreciation of nature, **we were able to fund three exciting new projects:** 1) An Eagle Scout Project to upgrade and landscape a bird feeding/wildlife viewing area at J.J. Audubon State Park. 2) An observation deck for a new rail marsh birding trail at Hovey Lake FWA. And 3) Sponsor a Motus-tagged Wood Thrush through the Chasing Melody Indiana Wood Thrush Conservation Project.

This could only happen because of the generosity of supporters and friends like you! Thank you!! It's only through your ongoing support that we will continue our mission to promote the awareness, appreciation, and preservation of birds and other wildlife and their habitats through education and conservation.

Though we came up a bit short on our fundraising last year, we now hope to make up for that shortfall by setting **an ambitious goal of \$4000** because of the importance of these many projects to our mission. Our goal is to cover our usual Tekoppel School 2nd grade classroom birding project, Patchwork Central summer camps that emphasize nature, Evansville Audubon's 'education ambassador' outreach to schools, scouts, camps and more, and 'sponsor-a-preserve' at Eagle Slough Natural Area; plus extra dollars for any new projects on the horizon!

Together we can do this. Please help us to continue this kind of outreach by supporting us again or becoming a new supporter! Make your check out to Evansville Audubon Society and mail to: Evansville Audubon Society, 551 N. Boeke Rd., Evansville, IN 47711. Remember, your contributions are fully tax deductible as Evansville Audubon Society is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization. Also, many employers will match donations to local nonprofits, so be sure to check with your employer!

Sue Vernier, President

And **THANK YOU!** To those who have already given...

Susan Knapp

Valerie McCoy

Phil and Pat Copp

Renee Foders

Richard and Sue Vernier

Steve and Kathy Briscoe

Sherrienne Standley

Ginger Franz

Charlene Talley

Laurel Vaughn

Melissa Vandever

Jim and Mary Jo Campbell

Mike Lodato

Gay Marie Weir

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.

Nov. 19, 2024 -- "Odonata of the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge & MA", presented by Donald Batema, retired. Don will discuss an important group of organisms, the Odonata, namely damselflies and dragonflies, that inhabit the wetland areas of Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge. A study was conducted to document what species occur on the Refuge and to highlight the importance of Odonata.

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.**

The 125th Christmas Bird Count is around the corner!

We're getting ready for the 125th Christmas Bird Count, which will go from December 14th to January 5th! [Head to christmasbirdcount.org](https://christmasbirdcount.org) to learn about the program and find out how you can get involved. Compilers are starting to plan the dates for their counts, which will show up in the link (**or see below for local area information**). We hope you will plan to join us in one of the longest-running wildlife censuses in the world!

To sign up for one (or more!) of our local area counts, please contact one of the following count compilers:

Western Gibson CBC - **SAT., Dec. 14:** Dan Collins, dancollinspest@gmail.com

Posey CBC - **SAT., Jan. 4:** Jared Emmack, jemmack@dnr.in.gov

Vanderburgh CBC - **TBA:** Jacob Scheller, jscheller@warrick.k12.in.us

Oakland City CBC - **TBA:** Heath Hamilton, heath_hamilton@fws.gov

Birders of all ages and skill levels are welcome. Volunteers will be assigned to small groups to cover the marked routes counting every bird they see. Feeder watchers are also welcome.

FIELD TRIP:

Sunday, December 8, OWL PROWL

Join Evansville Audubon for our annual owl prowl at Somerville Mines on Sunday, Dec. 8, 2024, to look for owls and other raptors, and whatever else comes our way. Details on time and meeting place TBD.

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



Short-eared Owl Photo by Don Batema

Evansville Audubon Society Education & Conservation Grants Are Available

Evansville Audubon Society is now accepting applications for its education and conservation grants! We are offering small grants (generally \$500 to \$1,000) for individual or group projects that are either educational in nature or support a conservation need and include an emphasis on the environment and natural areas. As usual, dollars that were earmarked for our grants were quickly depleted last year, and we anticipate that they will be expended quickly this coming year.

Applications should include:

- A brief description of the project
- Items/activities to be accomplished by the project
- Budget amount to meet the goal
- Timeline for completion of the project

If you have an education or conservation project in mind for which a small grant would be beneficial; or you know of an organization or individual in need of a grant, simply send the information to Sue Vernier, Evansville Audubon President, rsavcaver2@gmail.com. All grant requests are considered on a first-come, first-serve basis until all funds available are expended. To stretch our dollars further, we may need to consider partially funding a request; so please let us know if this is acceptable.

Projects that we've funded in the past include: Tekoppel 2nd grade classroom bird watching project; "Sponsor a Preserve" at Eagle Slough Natural Area; Eagle Scout project at JJ Audubon S.P.; birding trail observation deck at Hovey Lake FWA; Chasing Melody Indiana Wood Thrush Conservation Project; and Evansville Audubon's 'education ambassador' outreach to schools, scouts, community groups, and more.

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!

AUDUBON PROTECTS FLORIDA STATE PARKS FROM DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Did you know that Evansville Audubon Society is a chapter of National Audubon and that your membership in the Audubon organization, makes you part of the largest and most effective grassroots environmental organization in the country? You are part of the cohort of individuals that can and do make a difference! Read on about the recent successful effort to protect Florida State Parks:

At the end of September, Audubon staff, members, and outdoor enthusiasts celebrated the defeat of a suite of proposals that would have built golf courses, hotels, pickleball courts, and more in nine of Florida's busiest state parks. The public had only one week to organize before eight meetings (scheduled during the work day, with no virtual component, and all at the same time) convened to take comment on the proposals.

Florida State Parks often protect some of the last, best remaining examples of rare habitats and views left in the rapidly urbanizing state. Florida has no shortage of places to swing a golf club, sample the continental breakfast, or try your hand at pickleball—but it's increasingly rare to spot the Florida Scrub-Jay, witness neotropical bird migration, or experience Florida in all its natural beauty.

As soon as Audubon Florida staff learned of the proposals, they began calling state officials and alerting their members to the state park threat. Immediately, responses rolled in as more than 30,000 people used the action alert to send letters to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Governor Ron DeSantis. Members of the Audubon policy team contacted stakeholders and pulled together critical information on the impacts of the proposed development, worked with a robust network of conservation leaders to coordinate public meeting attendance, and led outreach efforts. The media took note: Over 80 stories ran with quotes from local leaders of Florida's 44 Audubon chapters.

Amidst the bipartisan avalanche of public support for the state parks and rejection of these development proposals, the public meetings were first delayed and then cancelled altogether as Governor DeSantis sent the management plan amendments "back to the drawing board."

Passionate conservationists and park lovers across the state wrote letters, shared updates, and called elected officials—and it worked! Audubon was part of the effort to create Florida's state parks and is just as important to the survival of these special places and their wildlife today.

Today Evansville Audubon members aren't being called upon to save an Indiana State Park from an unsound proposal, but right now you are part of an international partnership that includes EAS, Indiana Audubon, Indiana DNR, and USFWS (and other Audubon chapters as well) for the first full scale, life-cycle tracking project of Wood Thrushes from every part of their range, both summering and wintering grounds, to stop their decline. Nearly 4% of the entire population of Wood Thrushes nest in Indiana and the Wood Thrush is on the USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern list. Your membership and donations make this project possible.

Evansville Audubon Society Minutes September 17, 2024

Program: at 6:00 PM – Allisyn-Marie Gillet, State Ornithologist, IDNR gave a presentation on “Chasing Melody Wood Thrush Project”. Evansville Audubon was a sponsor for the tagging of one wood thrush around the Hovey Lake area. Allisyn Marie was the one that tagged the Audubon bird and gave details of the bird and the project utilizing the MOTUS wildlife tracking system. Indiana Audubon has funded next years project. The goal is to tag 600 birds of which 26 birds will be in Indiana.

The business meeting convened at 6:53pm at Wesselman Woods Nature Center. A quorum was present with seven board members - Brian Taylor, Richard Vernier, Sue Vernier, Phil Copp, Pat Copp, Jim Kimsey and Pam Kimsey.

Minutes: The June 2024 annual meeting minutes were approved.

Treasurer's report: Richard Vernier gave the treasurer's report as of 9/13/2024.

Income of \$0.02, interest

Expenses of \$0.00

Current checking balance is \$5,248.35.

Checking account without the reserve account balances is \$2,395.74

Reserve account balances

Education & Conservation \$0.00

Jr. Birders \$280.00

Lewis Memorial[\$2,572.61

Total \$2,852.61

Other Accounts

Bulk mail \$0.00

Savings \$5.09

CD 14 month at 4.85% \$3,464.57

Total \$3,469.66

Richard informed the group that the Indiana business entity fee was paid and filed.

Committee Reports:

Field Trips

September 28th and October 5th hikes will be conducted at Eagle Slough at 7:30am. These walks should last 1 1/2 to 2 hours. October 12th will be the Big Sit from 6am to 8:30am at Cane Ridge. **Programs**

The November program was to be presented by Alex Gansmann from Wild Birds Unlimited, but due to scheduling issues it will need to be postponed. Greg Miller at JC's Wildlife has offered to present on backyard feeding instead.

Junior Birders- Hope Hartman conducted an outing on Saturday September 14th, 2024.

Conservation- No update

Education and Conservation Grants- Sue Vernier announced the applications for education and conservation grants will start October 1st 2024.

Events – No update

Media/Marketing- Brian Taylor gave an update on a new website format that is in the works by Don Batema.

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

New Business:

Richard Vernier presented the 2024-2025 budget. The budget was unanimously approved.

There is \$2,572.61 left in the memorial fund. A motion was made by Sue Vernier to move \$1,250 to the education and conservation fund and \$1,322.61 to the general fund. It was unanimously approved.

Items from the floor: none

Bird observations: It was reported that on September 18th 2024 a clapper rail was spotted near Louisville at the Hayes Kennedy Park.

Meeting adjourned at about 8:00

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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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

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