



THE BLUEBIRD

Evansville Audubon Society Newsletter



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In Trees

With apologies to Joyce Kilmer

*I think that I have never heard
A singer lovely as a bird.*

*A bird, who clad in colored vest,
Nestles in its treeborne nest;*

*A bird that beckoned y the skies,
Lifts its feathered arms and flies;*

*A bird that calls out in rejoice,
To bathe the heavens with its voice.*

*There's little doubt that God con-
ferred
His sweetest songs upon the bird,*

*But must these minstrels e'er display
them
Saturday morning at five AM?*

The 19th annual GBBC takes place February 17-20, 2017



1. Create a GBBC account. This applies to those who have never participated in the GBBC before or those who did not participate in 2013 when GBBC was integrated with eBird--a worldwide bird data collection program used for keeping track of your personal bird records and bird lists. You will be able to access all your observations under a single account. If you're already registered with eBird or another Cornell Lab citizen-science project, you can use the same login information.

2. Count birds for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the GBBC. You can count for longer than that if you wish! Count birds in as many places and on as many days as you like—one day, two days, or all four days. Submit a separate checklist for each new day, for each new location, or for the same location if you counted at a different time of day. Estimate the number of individuals of each species you saw during your count period.

3. Enter your results on the GBBC website by clicking "Submit Your Bird Checklist" on the home page. See our downloadable instructions below for additional details on entering your checklists. If you already use eBird, please continue using eBird to submit your sightings but be sure to enter at least one checklist during the GBBC weekend!

**Photos
taken by an
EAS member**

**(Nice Back-
yard Birds!**



.....from the GBBC web-
site (gbbc.birdcount.org)

EAS Minutes

October 18, 2016 WNP

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm by Vice President, Sue Vernier.

Minutes of November meeting, were approved as sent via email to the board

Treasurer's Report:

Balances in December: Bulk Mail: \$162.69, Savings: \$5.09, Certificate \$4866.11, Checking \$4923.28, Checking w/o Reserves \$2349.28.

Reserve Accounts total \$2574.00

Education and Conservation \$1256.26 (NAS Grant Swift Tower transferred in), E-scripts \$207.93, NAS Grant Swift Tower \$0.00, OVBF (\$100 spent on van) \$1109.81.

Treasurer's report approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Field Trips - Bird Counts are December field trips.

Programs – January– Box Turtles at PRNWR which we help fund.

Old Business –funding level fir Tekoppel Education Grant Proposal. – wait to January to see what other requests come in.

Newsletter Deadline December 28.

Steve Heeger moved, Pam Kimsey 2nded that the Treasurer be authorized to pay for a membership for non-member speakers.. Motion passed.

Bird Sightings. A Male Whooping Crane was seen at the Western Gibson Count. Then others came in too quickly for secretary to record. "Lonesome Larry" at Cane Ridge, Blue Goose, 8 Mute Swans, Hermit Thrush, 20 Chipping Sparrows, Great Egret, Trumpeter Swan at Sauerhaber.

Meeting adjourned at 6:24
Respectfully Submitted
Carolyn Bennett, Secretary pro tem



Taken by EAS Member Steve Heeger

Send YOUR photos to the editor at jrussell@usa.com and they will printed in future issues!

Volunteer Opportunities

We are looking for replacements for two of our volunteers. The first is a person to be the coordinator for our very successful Junior Birder program. This program consists of typically six hikes throughout the year with young birders, ages 8 to 18, and led by our very knowledgeable Chris Newman. The coordinator basically needs only to schedule the dates and coordinate with the participants. The popularity and success of this program can be seen from the comments of the Jr. Birders in the report in this and previous newsletters. If you have questions, you can contact Carol Pettys, who originally organized the program and has done a great job since its beginning. Her email is pettys1234@aol.com.

The second position needing to be filled is for newsletter mailing. This job consists of just getting the newsletters from the printer, attaching the mailing tabs and address labels, and delivering them to the downtown Post Office with the mailing form. There are six newsletters per year. If you are interested, please contact president Don Batema, dbatema@evansville.edu.



ON-LINE NEWSLETTERS

We are again inviting members to choose the on-line version of our newsletter, rather than the printed, mailed copy. The two advantages are, first, that it saves postage and paper (trees), and the second is that the on-line version includes color photos of birds submitted by our members, shots from field trips ,etc. If you would like to try this option, please send your name and email address to Steve Heeger, sdheeger@sbcglobal.net. If you have already been using this option and have changed your email address, also please send in your new address. Of course, the on-line version is available on our website, evvaudubon.org, for those wanting to view the additional photos not included in the mailed version.



Interested in endangered species??

The Indiana Endangered Species list can be reached via the DNR Wildlife Diversity Section page:
<http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/2356.htm>

"Once upon a time, when women were birds, there was the simple understanding that to sing at dawn and to sing at dusk was to heal the world through joy. The birds still remember what we have forgotten, that the world is meant to be celebrated."

– Terry Tempest Williams, When Women Were Birds: Fifty-four Variations on Voice

“Some birds are not meant to be caged, that’s all. Their feathers are too bright, their songs too sweet and wild. So you let them go, or when you open the cage to feed them they somehow fly out past you. And the part of you that knows it was wrong to imprison them in the first place rejoices, but still, the place where you live is that much more drab and empty for their departure.”

— Stephen King, *Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption: A Story from Different Seasons*

Jr. Birder Hike, November 19, Howell Wetlands



It was a cloudy, very cool morning when the JB's set off for the last JB hike of 2016. Expectations were not high. Were we wrong! 27 species were spotted or heard. Not much happened by the time we reached the ballpark but

then Mendy's sharp eyes spotted a Red-shouldered Hawk. It landed nearby and everyone got amazingly close to him. Thinking it might be injured, our leader Chris Newman approached until it finally took off. We guessed from its behavior that it had just enjoyed a hearty meal. Also sighted very close to the group were Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and a Brown Creeper! It seems we always add to our memories of nature when we're outdoors.

Jr. Birder memories of this hike:

I had a great time! We saw lots of cool birds and lots of geese and ducks in the pond. The best was the Red-shouldered Hawk. It was very interesting. Heather

I enjoyed seeing the Red-shouldered Hawk up close. Seeing Kinglets was cool, too. Ryan

This hike was really cool because I got to see a Brown Creeper for only the second time in my life. They are really cool birds. Also it was interesting seeing a Red-shouldered Hawk up really close. It is rare to see one in the wild that close. Kolten

This was a pretty cool hike because this was the first time I have seen a Brown Creeper. It was also cool because that Red-shouldered Hawk was just sitting there while Chris got so close to him! It was pretty rare to see it like that! Lily

If you know of a student (8-18) years old who would like to join Jr. Birders, contact Carol: pettys1234@aol.com We take around 5 hikes a year in various birding hot spots in the Evansville area. Binoculars are provided. Free. Sponsored by Evansville Audubon.

Submitted by Carol Pettys



Christmas Bird Count Vanderburgh County

The 2016 CBC was conducted on December 17 by nine teams, with 18 field counters and 6 feeder counters. We were fortunate again weather-wise, with very mild temperatures and only a few sprinkles. The count area includes a 7.5 mile radius circle centered in downtown Evansville, which actually extends across the Ohio River into part of Kentucky. It takes in a quite varied assortment of habitats, and resulted in a very respectable total species count of 76. Some of the special sightings (or audible IDs) were: a Great Egret; three owl species--Great-Horned, Barred and Screech; 25 Wild Turkeys; Red-Headed Woodpeckers (which, alas, is getting to be very scarce); Phoebe; and 1300 Robins (!). Of course, the count also included a good assortment of the usual and not so usual waterfowl, hawks, woodpeckers, various sparrows, etc.. Many thanks to those who helped in the count this year.

Submitted by Steve Heeger

EVER-REDS

(From the Journal of Henry David Thoreau, Dec. 1, 1853)

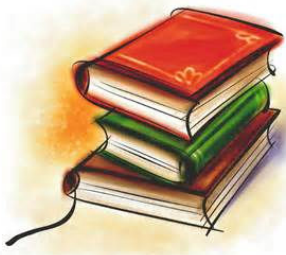
“Those trees and shrubs which retain their withered leaves through the winter--shrub oaks and young white, red, and black oaks, the lower branches of larger trees of the last-mentioned species, hornbeams, etc., and the young hickories—seem to form an intermediate class between deciduous and evergreen trees. They may almost be called the ever-reds. Their leaves, which are falling all winter long, serve as a shelter to rabbits and partridges and other quadrupeds and birds. Even the little chickadees love to skulk amid them and peep out from behind them. I hear their faint, silvery, lispings notes, like tinkling glass, and occasionally a sprightly *day-day-day*, as they inquisitively hop nearer and nearer to me. They are our most honest and innocent little bird, drawing yet nearer to us as the winter advances, and deserve best of all of the walker.”



Submitted by Steve Heeger

“The reason birds can fly and we can't is simply because they have perfect faith, for to have faith is to have wings.”

— J.M. Barrie, *The Little White Bird*

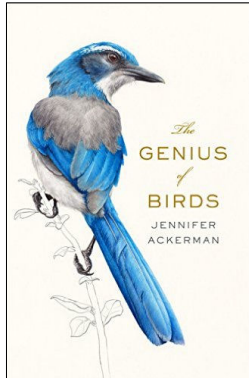


Book Review: *The Genius of Birds*

In *The Genius of Birds*, acclaimed author Jennifer Ackerman explores the newly discovered brilliance of birds. As she travels around the world to the most cutting-edge frontiers of research—the distant laboratories of

Barbados and New Caledonia, the great tit communities of the United Kingdom and the bowerbird habitats of Australia, the ravaged mid-Atlantic coast after Hurricane Sandy and the warming mountains of central Virginia and the western states—Ackerman not only tells the story of the recently uncovered genius of birds but also delves deeply into the latest findings about the bird brain itself that are shifting our view of what it means to be intelligent.

Consider, as Ackerman does, the Clark’s nutcracker, a bird that can hide as many as 30,000 seeds over dozens of square miles and remember several months later where it put them, or the mockingbirds and thrashers, species that can store 200 to 2,000 different songs in a brain a thousand times smaller than ours.



But beyond highlighting how birds use their unique genius in technical ways, Ackerman points out the impressive social smarts of birds. They deceive and manipulate. They eavesdrop. They give gifts. They kiss to console one another. They blackmail their parents. They alert one another to danger. They summon witnesses to the death of a peer. They may even grieve.

This elegant scientific investigation and travelogue weaves personal anecdotes with fascinating science. Ackerman delivers an extraordinary story that will both give readers a new appreciation for the exceptional talents of birds and let them discover what birds can reveal about our changing world. Richly informative and beautifully written, *The Genius of Birds* celebrates the triumphs of these surprising and fiercely intelligent creatures.

“[A] gloriously provocative and highly entertaining book. Jennifer Ackerman provides a masterly survey of research in the last two decades that has produced a revolution in our understanding of bird cognition. The Genius of Birds [is] important not only for what it says about birds, but also about the human ingenuity entailed in unraveling the mysteries of the avian brain. It is at once a book of knowledge but also a work of wonder and an affirmation of the astonishing complexity of our world.” —Wall Street Journal

Miscellanea About the Ostrich



There is just one known species of ostrich in the world—it is in the order of *Struthioniformes*.

The largest bird egg in the world today is that of the ostrich. Ostrich eggs are from six to eight inches long. Because of their size and the thickness of their

shell, they take forty minutes to hard-boil.

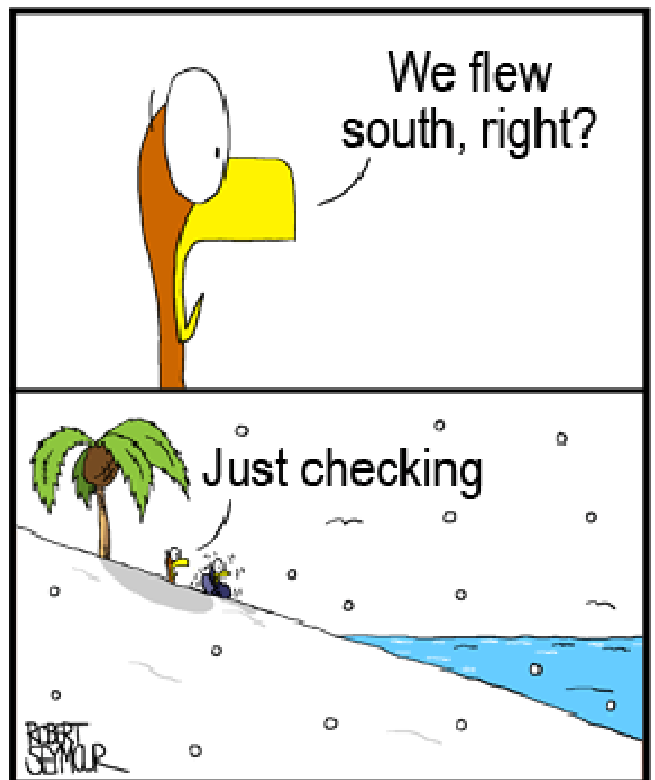
The ostrich has only two toes, unlike most birds, which have three or four.

The ostrich has four eyelids. The inner lids are for blinking and keeping the eyeballs moist, the outer lids for casting come hither glances at potential mates.

An ostrich’s eye is bigger than its brain.

To keep cool, ostriches urinate on their legs; it then evaporates like sweat.

BirdBreath





Upcoming Programs

Programs are at WWNP, at:700pm

January 17, 2017, "*Eastern Box Turtle Translocation Project*", Jason Mirtl, DNR Nongame Assistant Biologist. Come learn about how a single citizen's concern for the potential impact of major new highway construction on the beloved Eastern Box Turtle sparked a project involving a multitude of agencies and people trying to save the Eastern Box Turtles and their eventual translocation to our own Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge.

February 21, 2017, "*Barn Owl Nest Boxes at Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge*", Heath Hamilton

March 21, 2107, "*Hemlocks under Attack*", Andrew Nunn

April 18, 2017, "*The Singing Life of a Bell's Vireo*", Don Batema

May 16, 2017, "*Attracting beneficial insects to your landscape to reduce the use of pesticides*", Paul Bouseman

June 20, 2017, *Indiana's Bicentennial: "Under the Arms of an Elm"* Susan Fowler



Christmas Bird Count, Gibson County

The west Gibson CBC was held on December 18th, 2016. Weather conditions for the count were less than desirable with 20MPH north-northwest winds with driving snow and slick road conditions to start the day. The winds eventually died down making birding conditions more bearable. Despite the poor weather, the west Gibson CBC provided 107 species with two uncountable whooping cranes. Some of the more notable records were: cackling goose (5), wood duck (1), greater scaup (1), least sandpiper (5) and chipping sparrows (an unbelievable 35 in three different areas). Our biggest misses included great horned owl and pine siskin. Low counts included a single rough-legged hawk and a handful of swamp sparrows. High counts included cedar waxwing (309), rusty blackbird (148) and purple finch (13).

I would like to thank the 21 volunteers who made the west Gibson CBC successful. Their hard work and perseverance through the tough weather conditions allowed us to find a staggering 107 species plus the two uncountable whooping cranes.

Dan Collins



Attention Schnuck's Shoppers!!!

Please support Evansville Audubon by shopping at a Schnuck's grocery

store. Just pick up a Schnuck's eScrip Customer Card at the customer service desk and follow the directions on the card to register. Our group ID number is: 500023419

A percentage of your purchases at Schnucks' will benefit the education funds of EAS. Every time you shop at Schnuck's give the checker your eScrip card to scan. It's just that easy and it won't cost you a thing! We thank Schnuck's for donating over \$500 to our education funds via eScrip. This money is used for various environmental/conservation projects.

Questions? contact Carol: pettys1234@aol.com or 867-6231



To all who have contributed to Evansville Audubon we thank you for your support.

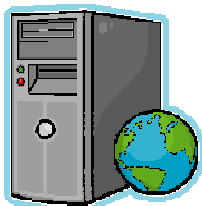
Your response ensures our continued outreach to the community with sponsorship of the Ohio Valley Birding Festival, continuation of the Chimney Swift Towers project, and education and conservation grants.

- Susan Everett
- Gregory Meyer
- Laurel Vaughn
- Richard and Sue Vernier
- Ronald and Doris Crawford
- Jack and Lois Schmidt
- Chuck Mills
- Dr. Shannon Lamb
- Nancy and Terry Gehlhausen
- Stepher Heeger
- Lynn Hanganu
- Jimmy and Vivian Ruff
- Mary Emily Damm
- Patricia Goodaker
- Carolyn Bennett
- Kathryn Lynch
- Grant Hartman

Visit our Website at www.evvaudubon.org

Latest information regarding field trips, photos, recent bird counts, etc.

Contact the webmaster at:
brian.taylor@haubstadt.com



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Visit our website at: www.evvaudubon.org

Moving? Send change of address to:
Steve Heeger
15340 Cemetery Road
Evansville, IN 47725

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.

Not an EVANSVILLE AUDUBON SOCIETY member? Join now and become a member of the National Audubon Society as well.

\$20: 1 year introductory rate

\$15: 1 year Student/ Senior (62 and over) rate

\$30: 2 year Special Rate

Mail to: Niles Rosenquist, EAS Treasurer, 732 S. Willow Rd., Evansville, IN 47714

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If this is for a gift, please include name and address of person giving gift:

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