



Northwest Illinois Audubon Society

www.nwilaudubon.org

NIAS MONTHLY MEETINGS

Join us the first Tuesday of every month, September through May. All of our meetings are open to the public.

Most meetings are held at the St John United Church of Christ, 1010 Park Blvd., in Freeport.

Most meetings begin at 7PM with announcements, followed by the program at 7:30 and then refreshments.

Check the current newsletter or our website (nwilaudubon.org) for specific monthly details, special events or any changes to the usual time and place.

Please join us!

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Top: Green-winged Teal by J.Eslu (Wikimedia Commons)

Text: audubon.org

Mid: View From Queens Bluff MN, by Dan Barron

Lower: Eagle Viewing, by Chris Kruger

December 2015 - January 2016

Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca*

Our smallest dabbling duck. Very common and widespread, remaining through the winter farther north than other teal. Often rests out of the water, even standing on low snags or branches. Flocks in flight appear very fast because of small size, with rapid twisting and turning in unison. Typically travels in small flocks, but in winter or at migration stopovers, may gather in concentrations of thousands.



THE DRIFTLESS AREA: A GEOLOGICAL ENIGMA

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND PROGRAM

December 1 at 7:00 PM

St John United Church of Christ

1010 Park Blvd, Freeport

The program for the meeting is titled "The Driftless Area: A Geological Enigma" and it will be presented by Randy Nyboer who is a research ecologist with the Illinois Natural History Survey. It will focus on the geological processes that formed the Driftless Area which partially lies in northwestern Illinois. From about 500 million years ago until the present some very unusual things happened that created this 10,000 square mile area of the Midwest. The end results also account for some of the rare plants and animals found there today.

MEMBER EXPERIENCES

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND PROGRAM

January 5 at 7:00 PM

St John United Church of Christ

1010 Park Blvd, Freeport



We will start the new year off with a members' night which means we are the program. This is how it works. If you have some pictures featuring birds, plants or other natural history subject (slides or in electronic format) you can share them as part of the program. You may also tell a story about an interesting encounter you may have had in the outdoors. Part of the program will feature pictures which have been taken during NIAS field trips of the last several months. Watch out, you may see yourself in some of these pictures. If you would like to be included as a part of the program please call Richard Benning (815-865-5279) by January 2.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Peggy Badgett Orangeville | Esther Schippels Rochelle | Wanda Hoover Rockford

CALENDAR CONSIDERATIONS

December 1 - GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND PROGRAM, *The Driftless Area: A Geological Enigma* at 7:00 p.m. (see page 1 for details)

December 2 - Wildlife Wednesdays with Juliet and Nancy "Birds & Winter Feeding" (see page 8 for more details)

December 5 - Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison, WI, 8:30 a.m. departure (see adjacent field trips on for more information)

December 12 - What do birds eat in the winter? A *Kids and Families* event, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. at Oakdale Nature Preserve (see page 8 for more details)

December 17 - Our monthly Conservation Conversation will be held at Amigo's Restaurant on the corner of Galena and Clark in downtown Freeport. Join us at 5:30 p.m. for some good food and friendly conversation about conservation issues. Newcomers (and old-timers, too) are welcome. Please join us.

January 5 - GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND PROGRAM, *Member Experiences* at 7:00 p.m. (see page 1 for details)

January 6 - Wildlife Wednesdays with Juliet and Nancy "Birds & Their Nests" (see page 8 for more details)

January 9 - Animal Tracks Winter Hike, A *Kids and Families* event, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. at Oakdale Nature Preserve (see page 8 for more details)

January 12 - NIAS Board meeting at St John UCC, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

January 16 - Open Land Birding at Local Sites, 9:00 a.m. departure (see adjacent field trips on for more information).

January 20 - "Talking About the Issues" monthly discussion, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the home of Fred and Carol Redmore, 1643 Hilltop Place, Freeport (815-721-3375). The first hour topic will be meeting the challenge of creating a connection of caring about the environment in the face of often gruesome ecological reality. For a copy of the reading, "The Messengers," contact Redmores. The second hour will be the customary discussion of whatever issues are brought forth. *Directions to Redmores: from HWY 26, turn east onto Young's Lane at the stoplight by Cub Foods. Before the block ends, turn south onto Hilltop Place. The Redmore home in the last place on the left before you get to the apartment complex.*

January 28 - Our monthly Conservation Conversation will be held at Amigo's Restaurant on the corner of Galena and Clark in downtown Freeport. Join us at 5:30 p.m. for some good food and friendly conversation about conservation issues. *Newcomers (and old-timers, too) are welcome. Please join us.*

FIELD TRIPS

DECEMBER - JANUARY

OLBRICH GARDENS BOLZ CONSERVATORY, MADISON, WI

Saturday, December 5, 8:30 a.m. departure

Leader: Mary Blackmore 815-938-3204

Join us as we take a trip to the tropics without leaving the midwest! Olbrich's Bolz Conservatory is a lush tropical paradise with exotic plants, bright flowers, a rushing waterfall, koi ponds, fragrant orchids and free-flying birds. Also available for viewing will be Olbrich's Holiday Express: Flower and Model Train Show featuring original LEGO creations, hundreds of colorful poinsettias and garden-scale model trains. The Conservatory is free on Saturday mornings but the Train Show exhibit is \$5.00 if you wish to see that. We'll spend about 2 1/2 hours at Olbrich's then head to the nearby Monty's Blue Plate Diner (voted "Best of Madison") for a late lunch.

Carpool from the Staples lot at 8:30 a.m.; return time around 4 p.m. Register by calling Mary at 815-938-3204 by December 2.

OPEN LAND BIRDING

Saturday, January 16, 9 a.m. departure

Leader: Mary Blackmore 815-938-3204

This should be a great opportunity to observe those open land species from the north that frequent our countryside in the winter. We hope to see Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs, Rough legged Hawks and if we're really lucky, perhaps a Northern Shrike, Merlin or Snowy Owl! We'll cruise country roads in local areas that were historically prairie. Viewing will be done predominantly from vehicles, using the cars as blinds. Optional lunch after in Freeport.

Carpool from the Staples lot at 9 a.m.; return around noon.



FIELD ORNITHOLOGY (BIOL 119)

WILL BE OFFERED AT HIGHLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE SPRING 2016

The course is worth 2 credit hours for college credit, but is open to all students. The course is designed to introduce bird species to the students with local field trips within the area. The lecture portion will meet Wednesday evenings from 6-6:50 p.m. and labs will be Friday mornings, scheduled from 8 am to 9:50 a.m. Note, some labs require early morning times to reach travel destinations for ample birding time and there may be occasional labs that run past 10:00 a.m. as well.

Instructor will be Biology instructor Juliet D'Souza (NIAS board member & education chair)
815-599-3578 or email juliet.dsouza@highland.edu.

To register go to www.highland.edu for more information | Classes begin January 13th

FIELD TRIPS RECAP



Horseshoe Mound Preserve
Tuesday, September 15, 2015



(L to R) Gay Brooks, Lois Winkel, Mary Blackmore, Judy Corrie, John and Anita Nienhuis, and Harlan Corrie



**Aldo Leopold Shack
and Leopold Center &
International Crane Foundation,
Baraboo, WI**
Saturday, October 3,



NIAS member Lois Winkel died tragically in a traffic accident on November 14th. When speaking of her enjoyment of the numerous field trips she had attended this year, Lois said she wanted to “give back” to our chapter so she volunteered for fall stewardship at our preserves. We appreciated Lois’s sense of humor, thoughtful discussions and love of nature.

Young Bluebirds with developing wing feathers are just beginning to show blue coloration.
photo by Dan Barron



NIAS
THANKS
YOU!



In the June - July issue of our newsletter we posted an appeal for people willing to fill open positions on the NIAS Board. We're happy to announce that a couple great volunteers signed up: Candy Colby has agreed to be our Conservation Chairperson, and Hannah Badgett has agreed to be our representative from the HCC Earth Club. Thanks to both of these folks for their interest and willingness to serve. At Audubon, volunteers are always welcome!

Read more about Candy on page 10

The Bluebird Report

Eurasian Tree Sparrows Again Dominate Nest Box Season

by Mary Blackmore

While this year's nest box activity at our Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve yielded fledged young for Eastern Bluebirds and Tree Swallows, the non-native Eurasian Tree Sparrows continue to provide stiff competition for those target species. Two successful bluebird nestings resulted in 8 fledged young and one successful swallow nesting produced 3 fledged young. Although not a target species, 3 House Wren nestings yielded 10 fledged young.

Eurasian Tree Sparrows (ETs) competed for 8 of the 9 boxes, increasing their activity from last year (6 boxes). Although originally thought to be less aggressive than the House Sparrow, this population of ETs appears to be quite aggressive,

even outcompeting the typically fierce territory-defending House Wren by building their nests atop wren nests.

Twenty ETs were introduced from Germany in 1870 in St. Louis, MO and for nearly a century remained largely confined to that area. Around 1960 the species began significantly expanding its range and was observed in our area a few years ago.

Few black flies, a historic cause for low bluebird and swallow reproduction, were observed this year. From the data recorded by our nest box monitors, ET activity appears responsible, at least in part, for the low reproductive success of our target species, despite the monitors' best efforts at promptly removing ET nests. Our chapter gives deep thanks to Terri Clark and Kriss Mulder for their time, effort and care in monitoring the Elkhorn Creek nest boxes. •

NEWS TO WHOOP ABOUT

Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin "Bridges"

A record 24 Whooping Crane chicks hatched from 37 nests this spring - 32 on the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge and five off the refuge. There were 27 separate pairs, 10 of which re-nested. Necedah staff pulled the initial clutch of eggs from eight nests as an experiment to encourage them to re-nest after the peak black fly hatching. All eight pairs successfully re-nested and hatched chicks. The Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership continues to work to expand the breeding range of these birds across central Wisconsin to diversify the habitats, predation pressures, and other conditions in which Whooping Cranes nest and raise chicks. To help achieve this goal, Operation Migration Ultralight trained six chicks at White River Marsh and began their migration to Florida in early October. Follow Wisconsin's whoopers at Facebook.com/WhoopingCraneEasternPartnership. •



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

It's time once again for the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society to participate in the annual Christmas Bird Count. This will be the 40th time that our chapter has taken part in this endeavor to take one-day snapshots of bird diversity and population in predetermined areas.

You are invited to be a part of this year's count. It will take place on Saturday, December 19. We will meet at the Spring Grove Family Restaurant, 1521 S. West Ave. in Freeport at 6:30 a.m. for a "Dutch-treat" breakfast. After eating, we will assign territories and divide up.

If you are a beginning or novice birder, we will assign you with a more experienced person. The count generally lasts through late afternoon. If you can only help for the morning or afternoon, we will be meeting at 12:00 noon at the Stephenson County Convention and Visitors Bureau on US Rt. 20 East to eat lunch and discuss afternoon plans. Bring a sack lunch, binoculars and dress for the weather.

Anyone who would like to do some early or late owling should contact count compiler Richard Benning at the number indicated below about the location you will be covering.

You may also be a part of the count by being a feeder counter. See the bird list and instructions. A sign-up sheet will be passed around at the December 1st NIAS monthly meeting for both field counters and feeder counters.

If you cannot attend the meeting and wish to participate, or if you have any questions, contact Richard Benning 815-865-5279.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT FEEDER COUNT PORTION

Participating in a CBC Feeder Count is easy and fun! First, be sure that your feeders are in the official count circle, a 15-mile diameter circle with Read Park in Freeport as the center. If you aren't sure if you are in the circle, call Richard Benning at the numbers listed above. On the count day, Saturday, December 19, simply watch your bird feeder(s) for at least 4 hours and record the largest number of each species present at any one moment. For example, don't add together the 8 juncos seen at 10 a.m. and the 10 juncos seen at 11:30 a.m. The final number should be 10, that is, the most seen at any one time.

You don't have to be glued to the window either, watching every bird for every minute. Just check your feeder often during the hours you are counting. Then complete the form below and mail as indicated by December 26th. Thanks!

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Date: _____

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mourning dove | <input type="checkbox"/> | Tufted titmouse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | House finch | <input type="checkbox"/> | Northern flicker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | White-breasted nuthatch | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pine siskin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Red-bellied woodpecker | <input type="checkbox"/> | Red-breasted nuthatch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | American goldfinch | <input type="checkbox"/> | Red-headed woodpecker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Brown creeper | <input type="checkbox"/> | Dark-eyed junco |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hairy woodpecker | <input type="checkbox"/> | Carolina wren |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Tree sparrow | <input type="checkbox"/> | Downy woodpecker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | European starling | <input type="checkbox"/> | White-throated sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Blue jay | <input type="checkbox"/> | House sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Song sparrow | <input type="checkbox"/> | American crow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Northern cardinal | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black-capped chickadee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Purple finch | <input type="checkbox"/> | (other) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | (other) | <input type="checkbox"/> | (other) |

Please mail form to:

RICHARD BENNING, P.O. BOX 11, DAVIS, IL 61019
NO LATER THAN December 26th. THANKS!

TOWARD A COOLER PLANET

47th in a Series, by Dan Barron

TAR SANDS OIL, PART II

On November 6th President Obama announced that his administration had rejected the Keystone XL oil pipeline (KXL). A project that once completed would have moved roughly 800,000 additional barrels of dirty, carbon-heavy oil per day of from the tar sands of Canada to U.S. refineries along the Gulf Coast.

This action by the president indicates some significant commitment of reducing U.S. contributions to climate change, a push that he seems to be making with more determination while heading into the last year of his presidency.

Clearly the rejection of one highly-politicized infrastructure project will not stop the destructive development and extraction of tar sands oil. Nor will the rejection of KXL halt the dangerous transport of oil through environmentally sensitive regions of North America. Sensitive areas that include the Mississippi Flyway, which has seen several significant oil spills in recent years, including a 120,000 gallon spill on the Mississippi River near Columbus, Kentucky in September of this year.

Unfortunately KXL is not the central stone in our global oil market. Tar sand development will proceed, even more rapidly if trends in global oil prices reverse.

What the rejection of KXL does acknowledge are years of warning, dissent and protest by scientists, environmental groups and millions of individuals who oppose the expansion of fossil fuel development. Some of which include Indigenous People of whose rights are increasingly strained by the widespread fragmentation and disturbance of tar sands oil. This rejection reiterates the importance to leave fossil fuels in the ground if we are to avoid the worst consequences of climate destabilization.

As we move beyond the Keystone XL decision (and recognize that KXL may reappear), our priority should not lose sight on shifting the market demand from carbon intensive fuels to renewable energy and lower (rational) levels of consumption. A less habitable planet will only become uninhabitable if our society continues to ignore the perils of unsustainable consumption out of convenience.



Tim Smith, Candy Colby, Mary Blackmore and Richard Benning

Thank you to all who purchased birdseed from our recent fundraiser!

We sold over 25,000 pounds of seed with a profit of over \$3000.00. The proceeds will be used to support our many chapter programs, activities, and publications.

The sale could not have happened without our team of volunteers: Tim Smith, Mary Blackmore, Lynn & Sandy Feaver, John Walt, Rex Sides, Candy Colby, John Nienhuis, Dave Derwent, John Day, Juliet D'Souza, Harlan & Judy Corrie, Mark Keister, Richard Benning, Doug & Laura Dufford, Dave & Virginia DeSwarte, Kara Gallup, Fred & Carol Redmore, Nancy Ocken, Dan Barron, and Chris Kruger.

Thanks also goes to Ray and Sean at the O'Mara Transport Company for hosting our main pickup point in Freeport, and to those who hosted our regional pick up points: John Day, Anne Straight, Chris Kruger, and Jeremy Dixon. Thank you to Joe Akins for donating all of our ear corn, to Cub Foods for donating the bags for the ear corn.

A Commitment to Notice

One Day at a Time

by Mary Blackmore

We're all busy. In the midst of this hurry much flies by unnoticed, often literally like birds heading south in the fall. Here's a simple suggestion to help you slow down a bit and be more present within your surroundings.

All you do is make a commitment to see, listen to, feel or even smell something in nature every day and then jot that observation in the small space of a calendar square for that day. It's a small commitment because the writing space is tiny, but it's a big accomplishment in sharpening your senses in your awareness of and connection to nature and in:

1. Diverting your attention from yourself - For a time your focus is on the multitude of other living things with which we share our planet.

2. Learning new things - Where does that Red-eyed Vireo you just saw migrate to in the fall? (western Amazonia - WOW.)

3. Being in the now - When observing nature you are truly present, not going over the past or fretting about the future.

4. Dabbling in phenology - If you make this small commitment a permanent habit, over time you may discover changes in bird migration and flower blooming times.

5. Improving your health - Recent research suggests a positive correlation between spending time in nature and the enhancement of your immune system.

6. Experiencing pure joy and wonder - Watching hundreds of swallows feeding on flying insects as they migrate south - how cool is that!

Make your observations wherever you wish, but you don't have to go very far. Walk to your mailbox. Look up at the sky. Listen. Breathe. And you don't have to wait until January 1 to start! I can't promise that you'll get healthier or smarter, but I'll bet you will smile a lot more and no doubt have your own WOW! moments. •

Unexpected Guests

by Dan Barron

When packing up for a short paddling trip in mid-September I noticed a monarch chrysalis on the side of my canoe. I carefully removed it and using masking tape attached it to a wire suspended from my house. Weeks passed and other monarchs matured and emerged but this chrysalis turned very dark, then faded to tan. I eventually brought it

inside where it hung on my refrigerator. Why? Because it looked too cool to toss into the garden.

A few weeks ago while packing my lunch for work I noticed dozens if not hundreds of tiny (harmless) parasitoid wasps emerging (I know a few people would not be excited by this discovery at 8:00 in the morning). Before leaving for work I popped the chrysalis into a glass tube to photograph at Prairie Moon Nursery.

(continued on page 10)



Tiny Pteromalus wasps emerge from a monarch chrysalis photos by Dan Barron

KIDS & FAMILIES

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR KIDS AND FAMILIES

WILDLIFE WEDNESDAYS WITH JULIET AND NANCY

Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
at the Freeport Public Library

Audubon board member and Education chair, Juliet D'Souza and Nancy Ocken, Board member-at-large, host a monthly series called Wildlife Wednesdays at the Freeport Public Library. During the program, they will provide a special story time with activities related to the theme that month. They will also bring specimens of critters. Appropriate audience is two to seven-year olds.

December 2 - *Birds & Winter Feeding*

January 6 - *Nests in Winter*

February 3 - *Bears & Other Hibernating Animals*

WHAT DO BIRDS EAT IN THE WINTER?

Saturday, December 12, 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
at Oakdale Nature Preserve

Not all birds migrate from our area – so what do the birds eat during the winter? Juliet D'Souza will teach the kids about winter feeding and have them make pine cone bird feeders to take home with them. She will lead a short hike around Oakdale to gather some pine cones and look for any creatures along the way. Kids of all ages and their families are welcome!

We will have binoculars for the kids to use and all of the materials to make the bird feeders. Sign-ups are encouraged – contact leader Juliet at 201-233-0946. Meet at the Mogle Building at 9:30am. If weather is questionable, call Juliet before the event.

ANIMAL TRACKS WINTER HIKE

Saturday, January 9, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
at Oakdale Nature Preserve

Juliet D'Souza will lead a winter hike to search for signs of wildlife. We will look for animal tracts, scat, and other signs of animals that live at Oakdale. Dress appropriately for the weather including footwear that protects your feet from snow. Kids of all ages and their families are welcome!

Sign-ups are encouraged – contact leader Juliet at 201-233-0946. Meet at the Mogle Building at 10am. If weather is questionable, call Juliet before the event.

KIDS & FAMILIES UPDATE

Carol Redmore and Juliet D'Souza led a “Kid's Fall Nature Walk” around the Newell Track at Oakdale Nature Preserve on October 17. The day started with 30 degree



weather, but that did not deter the 15 kids and adults from joining our hike. The kids were able to use our supply of binoculars to look for any birds. We occasionally had the kids stop and close their eyes a few times during the hike to listen to the sounds of nature. Juliet taught the kids about lichens, pillbugs, fungi, pine trees, and prairie plants. We had

fun searching for birds and other things in the park. One child found an insect gall and taught the others what it was. Many of the kids went into the creek to find water glider insects, but mostly just to splash in the water. The cold air and active movement made the day perfect for a fall nature hike.



*above: A dissected plant gall displays the contents within.
right: Creek exploration*

KIDS & FAMILIES

WILDLIFE WEDNESDAYS

Wildlife Wednesdays have been a hit! The children have enjoyed the books that were chosen for the theme of the day and especially enjoy the activities that follow.



Juliet shares bat specimens during the October "Batty for Bats" program

The October theme, "Batty for Bats" was an opportunity for the kids to learn about the importance of bats in nature. Juliet read a few books about bats and brought specimens for the kids to observe. She also discussed other nocturnal animals, such as owls and night-hawks, and demonstrated how the owls have specialized feathers to make them silent predators.

The November theme, "Birds and Beaks," was a chance for children to eat like a bird! After Juliet and Nancy read books about bird diversity, the children were able to play with bird tools that demonstrate how birds eat. Juliet made nine stations with various tools to mimic beaks and real food to teach the kids how they work. The "beaks" included needle-nose pliers to mimic fish eating beaks, a slotted spoon to mimic filter-feeding beaks, flat-nose pliers to act as seed-eating beaks, a baster to act as a hummingbird beak, plus many more. *Bring your kids to the next Wildlife Wednesday!*

NATURESPEAK

Try to maintain using words about nature around the children in your lives. Give your child opportunities to learn more words concerning nature and less about technology. This month, try to use the following words and try to show them examples as you enjoy nature with them:

Coniferous (*a cone-bearing tree with typically evergreen, needle-shaped leaves*)

Deciduous (*a plant that sheds its leaves seasonally*)

Endotherm (*an organism that generates body heat through internal mechanisms*)

Evergreen (*a plant that retains its leaves throughout the year*)

Feuillemort (*the color of a dying leaf*)

Foliage (*the leaves of a plant*)

Hibernation (*a state of inactivity & decreased metabolism in endothermic animals*)

Insulation (*a mechanism used to prevent loss of heat, such as fur or feathers*)

Migration (*the seasonal movement of animals from one region to another*)

Wildlife (*living organisms in the wild that are neither domesticated nor tamed*)

Visit our Kids and Families section on our webpage at <http://www.nwilaudubon.org/kids-families.asp>

Thank You All So Very Much

I extend my deepest thanks to the many people of our chapter who have been so supportive and helpful over the past months. Your calls, notes, visits and caring conversations have been so welcomed and appreciated. Thank you also for dedicating newsletter space for tributes to Keith. What a thoughtful gesture. For those who wonder, "So how is she doing?" I'm doing alright. I'm a slow adjuster and this continues to be a huge adjustment for me. But with the help, caring and love of family, friends and Mother Nature, I'm finding my way. Thank you again for all of your kindness.

– Mary Blackmore

AUDUBON CONNECTIONS

Candy Colby

by Carol Redmore

Meet our new Conservation chair, Candy Colby. Candy and Jack recently moved from Eagle River, Wisconsin and are now active members of NIAS.

Candy was born in Payton, Texas, about four hours from Houston. As she grew up in Texas, she loved animals and being outdoors. She was horrified when she saw the 146 oil refineries lined up on the Gulf shore; it seemed to her to be a vision of hell as she realized the extent of the water and air pollution and its deadly effects.

When Candy finished college in Houston, she moved to Illinois to be with her mother and step-father. There she met and married Jack, who worked for a large publishing firm and was transferred in the early 1970s to California. They loved California with its progressive views on environment and health. While there, they transitioned to vegetarianism because of the environmental issues and concern for animals. Candy worked actively with the Mountain Lion Institute to get rid of sport hunting of mountain lions; this work was successful as a referendum was passed to set aside habitat for the mountain lions.

Candy worked in medical records; after twenty years in California, Jack took early retirement

and they decided to return to the Midwest. They settled in northern Wisconsin in Eagle River, enjoying the different experiences of the Northwoods and that unique ecosystem. Candy started some vegetarian groups and they attempted to found or work with environmental groups, but there was little support in that area for such interests. Although they loved the Northwoods and valued their experiences there, the long winters and the general lack of interest in the environment fueled their decision to move further south.

They explored Wisconsin and found the beauty of southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois appealing. Monroe seemed a good possibility for a new home, but finding the housing they desired was not working out well. Then by chance Candy found an ad for a home in Freeport; it popped up on the realtor's listing—and that was their future home.

Now happily settled, they are enjoying Freeport and northern Illinois and especially Audubon with the many activities and discussion groups. We are equally happy to have them and look forward to many years of camaraderie as we work together for a healthy environment.



A monarch chrysalis hangs from my canoe
photos by Dan Barron



During my 30 minute drive another 20-30 wasps emerged. Later that morning I was able to photograph the wasps as more emerged.

I forwarded these photos to the Monarch Joint Venture at the University of Minnesota and Carl Stenoi, a Graduate Research Fellow with The Monarch Lab at UMN was kind enough to reply: “*These are probably Pteromalus cassotis, but I can't be 100% sure without seeing them under a microscope.*”

As we well know, monarch butterfly larvae depend exclusively on milkweeds and adults rely on the nectar of other native flowering species. I had never considered the less familiar species that depend on monarchs. How many other species go unseen? Like monarchs they too are in peril due to habitat loss but even a small garden with native plants can do a world of good (especially for these tiny Pteromalus wasps). •

A follow-up from Carl Stenoi: “I received the wasps today (and some were still alive!). They are, indeed, *Pteromalus cassotis*, a potential specialist on monarchs.”

Would you like to join Audubon as a NEW Member or give a GIFT membership?

Two types of membership are available:

1. Northwest Illinois Audubon Society and National Membership

includes this local newsletter, local mailings and the national "Audubon" magazine.

____ Individual \$20 ____ Senior Citizen \$15 ____ Student \$9

Prices listed are for NEW national memberships only and DO NOT apply to renewals.

All renewals for national memberships need to use the national membership form.

2. Northwest Illinois Audubon Society Local only Membership

includes this newsletter and other mailings from our local chapter. ____ Local Only \$15

Name of new member or gift recipient _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

If this is a gift membership, please indicate the name of the person providing the gift membership:

Name _____

Make check payable to **NORTHWEST ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY** and mail to:

Treasurer, Northwest Illinois Audubon Society, P.O. Box 771, Freeport, IL 61032

BOARD MEMBERS

President | Lynn Feaver

3003 Forest Rd - Freeport IL 61032

815-235-9530

Vice President & Finance | Rex Sides

Secretary | Laura Dufford

Treasurer | Tim Smith

At-large | Gay Broocks, Mark Keister,

Nancy Ocken, Kayse Rushford,

Larry Seffrood and Steve Simpson

HCC EARTH Club | Hannah Badgett

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Conservation | Candy Colby

Programs | Richard Benning

Education | Juliet D'Souza

Publicity | (open)

Membership | Bernard Lischwe

Field Trips | Chris Kruger

Sustainable Agriculture

Richard Benning, Mary Blackmore,

Laura Dufford and Heidi Thorp

Newsletter Editor | Dan Barron

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THANK YOU!

• Nancy and Randy Ocken for hosting this year's preserves volunteer potluck.

• Fall prairie seed collectors at both the Elkhorn Creek and Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserves: Anne Straight, Kara Gallup, Fred and Carol Redmore, Mary Blackmore, John and Anita Nienhuis, Nancy Ocken, Bernard Lischwe, Harlan and Judy Corrie, Josef Appell, Tom and Chris Hartung, John Walt, Chris Kruger, Gay Broocks, Rex Sides, Tim and Teresa Smith, Nancy, Trinity and Rowan Thornton, Nadia Wirch-nianski, Sarah, Lillian and Temple Webb, Juliet D'Souza, John and Kay Day.

• Anne Straight and Mary Blackmore for leading seed collecting outings.

• Anita Nienhuis, Mary Blackmore, Judy Corrie and Anne Straight for providing treats at seed collecting outings.

• Rex Sides and Lynn Feaver for mowing trails and firebreaks at our preserves.

• Phyllis Seffrood, Fred and Carol Redmore, Alice Akins and Mary Blackmore for providing campfire treats.

• Recent field trip leaders: Chris Kruger, Juliet D'Souza, Carol Redmore and Mary Blackmore.



Seed Collectors: Tom & Chris Hartung, John Walt, Anne Straight, Gay Broocks, Josef Appell, Bernard Lischwe. photo by Chris Kruger

• Fall Work session volunteers at our preserves: Judy and Harlan Corrie, Lois Winkel, Anne Straight, Mary Blackmore, Nancy Ocken, Kara Gallup, Lynn Feaver and Willem Dijstelbergen.

**Northwest Illinois
Audubon Society**

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