



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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Oakdale Nature Preserve Conservation Committee Update
7. Thank You!

Text: allaboutbirds.org
Top: Cedar Waxwing by Thompson Bill, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bottom: Photo provided by Juliet D'Souza

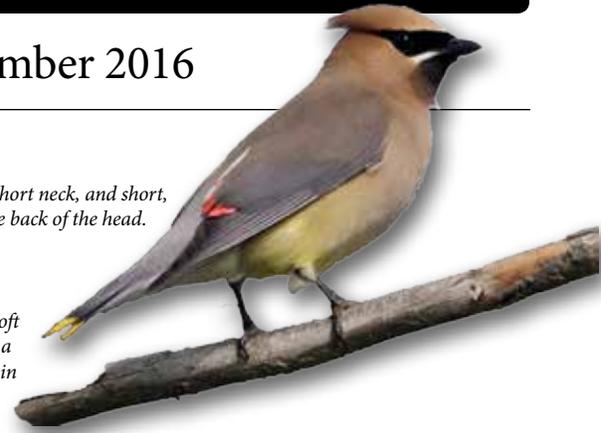
August - September 2016

Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum*

The Cedar Waxwing is a medium-sized, sleek bird with a large head, short neck, and short, wide bill. Waxwings have a crest that often lies flat and droops over the back of the head. The wings are broad and pointed, like a starling's. The tail is fairly short and square-tipped.

Cedar Waxwings are pale brown on the head and chest fading to soft gray on the wings. The belly is pale yellow, and the tail is gray with a bright yellow tip. The face has a narrow black mask neatly outlined in white. The red waxy tips to the wing feathers are not always easy to see.

Cedar Waxwings are social birds that you're likely to see in flocks year-round. They sit in fruiting trees swallowing berries whole, or pluck them in mid-air with a brief fluttering hover. They also course over water for insects, flying like tubby, slightly clumsy swallows. Look for Cedar Waxwings in woodlands of all kinds, and at farms, orchards, and suburban gardens where there are fruiting trees or shrubs.



GENERAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM AND POTLUCK A WEEK AT HOG ISLAND

September 6th at 6:00 PM
St. John United Church of Christ,
1010 Park Blvd. Freeport

Start the evening with a delicious potluck meal. Bring a dish to pass and your own table service. NIAS will provide beverages. After the meal, there will be a short business meeting with announcements. The program will follow at approximately 7:15 pm. Our program for the evening will be presented by Juliet D'Souza to discuss her recent experience at Hog Island Audubon Camp in Maine.

Juliet is a biology instructor at Highland Community College and is now serving her third term as a board member for NIAS.

She enrolled in the week-long Field Ornithology program at Hog Island in June and will share her remarkable experience. She received scholarships from both NIAS and the National Audubon Society to participate in this camp.

Hog Island is a 330-acre island located in Muscongus Bay in Bremen, Maine. Hog Island is part of Audubon's Project Puffin program, where work is done to restore nesting Atlantic Puffins to the shores of Maine. Juliet will discuss the history of Hog Island, the puffin restoration program, and what she learned during the course. Be prepared to see numerous photographs of the island and some of the 100+ bird species she observed, including several species of warblers, gulls, terns, scoters, Black Guillemot, Osprey, Bobolink, Common Eider, and of course, the Atlantic Puffin!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

- Nelda Boyle - Stockton
- Diane Neal- Freeport
- Douglas Freidag- Freeport
- Ann Sauer - Freeport
- Jaquelin Jazo - Freeport

CALENDAR CONSIDERATIONS

August 2 - Stewardship session at Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserve, 8-10 a.m. Leader: Mary Blackmore, 815-938-3204. Tools, gloves, water and snacks provided.

Carpool from the Staples lot at 7:15 a.m. The preserve is about 2 miles south of Leaf River in the southwest corner of the intersection of Leaf River Rd. and West Grove Rd. Parking is off of Leaf River Rd. (S. Main St. crosses HWY 72 in Leaf River and becomes Leaf River Rd.).

August 3 - Nature's Slowpokes - Audubon in the Library, Wildlife Wednesday. *Appropriate audience is two- to seven-year olds. 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.*

August 6 - Field Trip, Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. *See page 3 for details.*

August 8 - Stewardship session at the Freeport Prairie, 7-9 a.m. Leader: Mary Blackmore, 815-938-3204. Tools, gloves, water and snacks provided.

The prairie is just south of the intersection of Meadows Dr. and Walnut Rd. on the south side of Freeport. Parking is off of Walnut Rd.

August 10 - Perseids Campfire at Elkhorn Creek. We hope to catch the beginning of this annual meteor shower. Prairie walk at 7 p.m.; campfire at 8:00. S'mores and water will be provided. Bring a lawn chair and flashlight.

Carpool from the staples lot in Freeport at 6:30 p.m. The preserve is located about 3 miles southwest of Forreton in the southeast corner of West Grove and Freeport Roads. The parking lot is off of West Grove Rd. If weather is questionable, call Mary at 815-938-3204.

August 12 - Field Trip, Scotch Hill Farm and Sugar River Dairy, coordinated by the NIAS Sustainable Ag Committee. *See page 3 for details.*

August 25 - Conservation conversations at Amigo's in Freeport, 5:30 p.m.

August 28 - "Talking About the Issues" monthly discussion session, 2-4 p.m. at the home of Laura and Doug Dufford, 8957 Fitzsimmons Rd., Stockton, 815-541-8958.

For a copy of the first hour topic article call Laura. The second hour will be a discussion of whatever issues are brought forth. All are welcome.

Carpool from the Staples lot in Freeport at 1:30 p.m. or call the Duffords for directions.

September 3 - A Night of Exploring the Milky Way, 8 pm. *See page 3 for more details.*



Prairie stewardship group at Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve, July 9th. *photo by Chris Kruger*

September 7 - Butterflies and Moths - Audubon in the Library, Wildlife Wednesday. *Appropriate audience is two- to seven-year olds. 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.*

September 10 - Field Trip, Sand Bluff Bird Observatory. *See page 3 for details.*

September 13 - NIAS Board meeting, St John UCC, 7-9 p.m.

September 16 - Full Moon Campfire at our Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserve. Stroll the trails at 6:30 p.m.; campfire at 7:30. S'mores and water will be provided. Bring a lawn chair and flashlight.

Carpool from the Staples lot at 5:45 a.m. The preserve is about 2 miles south of Leaf River in the southwest corner of the intersection of Leaf River Rd. and West Grove Rd. Parking is off of

Leaf River Rd. (S. Main St. crosses HWY 72 in Leaf River and becomes Leaf River Rd.). If weather is questionable, call Mary at 815-938-3204.

September 17 - Kid's Nature Hike at Oakdale Nature Preserve - Aquatic Creatures. Meet at the Mogle Center at Oakdale Nature Preserve, 4433 S. Cranes Grove Rd. 10 a.m. to ~12 p.m.

September 21 - "Talking About the Issues" monthly discussion session, 7-9 p.m. at the home of Fred and Carol Redmore, 1643 Hilltop Place in Freeport 815-721-3375.

Information on the topic for the first hour will be available at the September 6 potluck/general membership meeting, or you can call Carol for a copy. The second hour will be the customary discussion of whatever issues are brought forth by participants. All are welcome to attend this issues discussion.

September 22 - Field Trip, Casper Bluff. *See page 3 for details.*

September 22 - Conservation conversations at Amigo's in Freeport, 5:30 p.m.

September 25 - Prairie seed collecting at Elkhorn Creek, 2-4 p.m. Tools, water, snacks and guidance provided.

Carpool from the staples lot in Freeport at 6:30 p.m. The preserve is located about 3 miles southwest of Forreton in the southeast corner of West Grove and Freeport Roads. The parking lot is off of West Grove Rd. If weather is questionable, call Mary at 815-938-3204.

October 8 - Mark your calendar now for a leisurely canoe trip down the Kishwaukee River led by Don Miller. *Details about this morning trip in the next newsletter.*

*Questions About Your Membership?
Contact Teresa Smith at
815-238-3963 or timtreetsmith@gmail.com*



Necedah National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, August 6, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Leader: Mary Blackmore, 815-938-3204
Carpool from Staples in Freeport at 7 a.m.

On this trip to Necedah, we hope to see Whooping Cranes and Karner Blue Butterflies, both federally endangered species, among the vast array of wildlife inhabiting the refuge. Established in 1939, Necedah - Ho Chunk for "land of yellow waters" - is a complex of wetlands, openlands and woodlands in central Wisconsin. In 2001, Whooping Crane chicks were released at Necedah as the initial action in a plan to restore an eastern migratory population of that species. Karner Blue larvae feed exclusively on wild lupine, abundant in Necedah's barrens habitat. Necedah staff will lead us on a guided tour.

We have rented a van for this trip, so you must register in advance. With limited space, call Mary to reserve your place as soon as possible. Bring with you: a sack lunch, \$10 van fee, binoculars, and money for a supper stop on the way home.

Field Trip Sugar River Dairy and Scotch Hill Farm

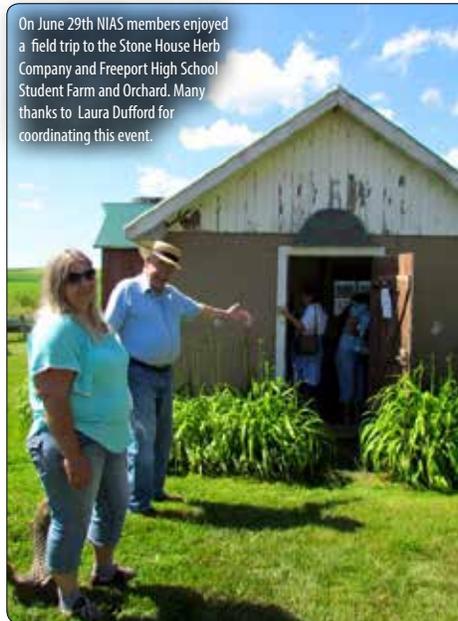
Friday, August 12, 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Leader: Richard Benning 815-865-5279
Carpool from Staples in Freeport at 8:00 a.m.

We will travel north of the border to visit two establishments in the local food movement. Our first stop will be Sugar River Dairy, located near Albany, Wisconsin. The yogurt produced at this dairy has won several awards at the World Cheese Championship. We will then travel the short distance to Scotch Hill Farm. This farm operates a CSA featuring certified organic vegetables, has heritage breeds of chickens, and makes hand-milled goat milk soap.

After the tour, we will eat lunch at a local restaurant before our return home.

On July 8th NIAS attendees visited the Freeport Prairie Nature Preserve and the Hansen-Blackmore Prairie at Highland Community College. Thanks to Mary Blackmore for leading this visit of two very different plant communities.



On June 29th NIAS members enjoyed a field trip to the Stone House Herb Company and Freeport High School Student Farm and Orchard. Many thanks to Laura Dufford for coordinating this event.

A Night of Exploring the Milky Way

Saturday, September 3, 8:00 p.m.

The Northwest Illinois Audubon Society will host "A night of exploring the Milky Way" at the Doug Firebaugh Observatory, Park Hills Golf Course, 2892 W. Stephenson St., on Saturday, September 3rd starting at 8 p.m. The staff of the observatory will lead an introduction and observing session of celestial objects visible in September. Among the objects that you can expect to see (weather permitting) are the planets Mars and Saturn, major constellations, double stars, star clusters, and planetary nebulae.

This event is open to all ages. In case of inclement weather, the event will still be held, but with a modified program in the observatory.

Sand Bluff Bird Observatory

Saturday, September 10, 7 a.m. to noon

Leader: Mary Blackmore 815-938-3204
Carpool from Staples in Freeport at 7 a.m.

Our visit to the banding station will occur during the historical peak fall migration, so if the weather is favorable, lots of birds should be captured and banded. We'll have an opportunity to walk the nets with volunteers as well as witness the banding process and learn all about the species being banded.

Cost is \$3 per person.

Call Mary to confirm your attendance.

A Morning at Casper Bluff

Thursday, September 22, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Leader: Laura Dufford, 815-541-8958
Carpool from Staples at 8:30 a.m.

Join us on this trip to scenic Casper Bluff, a property of the JoDavies Conservation Foundation near Galena. We'll be looking for fall migrants, blooming asters and goldenrods, plus late season butterflies. If we really get lucky we'll be treated to part of the fall Broad-winged Hawk migration. Casper Bluff features restored prairie, effigy mounds and spectacular views of the Mississippi.

We'll stop for lunch in Galena on the way home. Call Laura to confirm your attendance.

Bird Walks Delightful

Our series of spring bird walks were terrific this year as we progressed from easy-to-see waterfowl to active songbirds in fully leafed-out trees. Each walk averaged 8 participants and 40 species. All of the sites were in Stephenson County except for our Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve.

Species and behavior highlights included nesting Great-Horned Owls and Sandhill Cranes, Dickcissel, Pectoral Sandpiper, Red-winged Blackbird mobbing a Sandhill Crane, Red-headed Woodpecker and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. In later walks warblers were the favorites, whether it was getting good long looks at more abundant species such as Common Yellowthroat and Palm Warbler, or catching sight of less common species like Bay-breasted and Blackburnian Warblers.

Many thanks to the NIAS members who led the walks: Mary Blackmore, Somer Bozovsky, Richard Benning, Juliet D'Souza, Laura Dufford and Anne Straight. We hope you can join us next year when we'll once again enjoy the beauty and wonder of the spring migration.

KIDS & FAMILIES

AUDUBON IN THE LIBRARY

Wildlife Wednesday

Appropriate audience is two- to seven-year olds
10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

An Audubon member hosts a monthly series called Wildlife Wednesdays at the Freeport Public Library. The program begins with a special story time followed by an activity related to the theme.

August 3: Nature's Slowpokes
September 7: Butterflies & Moths



Kid's Nature Hike at Oakdale Nature Preserve Aquatic Creatures

Saturday, September 17
10:00 a.m. to approximately 12:00 p.m.

Meet at the Mogle Center at Oakdale Nature Preserve,
4433 S. Cranes Grove Rd.

We will take a short walk to collect aquatic organisms and bring them back to the Mogle center to look at them with microscopes & magnifying glasses. Along the way, we will try to catch flying insects to observe as well.

Open to kids of all ages. Parents must be present with the children during the event. Kids should dress appropriately for the weather and should wear shoes or boots that can get wet. Sign-ups are required. Contact leader Juliet D'Souza at 201-233-0946 to register and/or if weather is questionable.

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

Highland Lifelong Learning Course: Basic Birding

Instructor Juliet D'Souza

Course dates: Thursday evenings in the month
of September (Sept. 1, 8, 15, and 22)
6:30 pm to 8:00 pm

The course is intended for beginning birders interested in learning how to identify common birds that reside or migrate through the area. Participants will learn from photographs and bird study skins in the classroom. Basic bird adaptations and behaviors will also be discussed. Handouts will be provided, but participants should bring a field guide if available.

Registration deadline: August 25
Course Fee: \$25.00 total for all four sessions
For more information and/or to register:
highland.edu/admissions/LLClasses.asp
or 815-599-3414

2016 NIAS Board Retreat

On June 25th the leaders of our organization
gathered at the home of Mary Blackmore
for the 2016 Board Retreat.

Retreat topics included, but were not limited
to, preserve management and future goals,
community out-
reach including
programming
at the Oakdale
Nature Center,
and audio/visual
improvements
for future NIAS
meetings.



FALL PRAIRIE SEED COLLECTING

Every September and October we collect prairie seeds at our preserves for planting in degraded areas of those same sites. Our only long-range scheduled collecting outing at our Elkhorn Creek Preserve is September 25, 2-4 p.m. (see calendar).



Bernard Lischwe and Mary Blackmore collecting seed with NIAS issue "Milk Jug Seed Baskets"
photo by Dan Barron

An October date for Silver Creek will be in your next newsletter. However, we will be seed collecting on many more days on shorter notice as weather permits. To get on the call list for the spontaneous seed collecting outings, sign up at the September meeting or call Mary Blackmore at 815-938-3204.

When called, you may join us if you are available, or if not, we will catch you another time. We typically gather seeds for about two hours at a time during afternoons.

Seed collecting is an easy, leisurely task. Novices are welcome. There will always be a leader to point out which plants to pick seed from. Water, snacks and equipment will be provided.

Wear long pants and long sleeves. It's a fun way to spend a couple of hours on nice fall afternoons. We hope you can join us!



What a great looking group of board members!



Richard Benning working to dismantle the mural painted on seven 4x8 masonite panels at the nature center in Oakdale. The painting was painted in 1978 by our Audubon members and was removed and stored before the nature center was torn down last month. Now we need a new home for the mural.

The Oakdale Nature Center

Mary Blackmore researched our history with the Oakdale Nature Center. Here is a brief timeline:

1971 - Oakdale was acquired by the Freeport Park District.

1975 - NIAS was contracted to work with Oakdale to create exhibits and provide programming and staff.

1978 - The diorama (that Rex and Richard Benning recently dismantled and stored) was created.

1980's - The the park district staff grew, resulting in less participation needed by NIAS.

For 15 years, Food for Thought was held at Oakdale.

NIAS participation is currently limited to self-sponsored events such as bird walks and nature walks with kids.

Conservation Committee Update

Candy Colby, Conservation Committee Chair

“If you take care of the birds, you take care of most of the big problems in the world.” (Dr. Thomas Lovejoy, Professor of Environmental Science and Police, George Mason University as quoted in the National Audubon Society’s current strategic plan).

The National Audubon Society has just released its 2016-2020 strategic plan. While it takes a while to go through it, I would recommend it to all Audubon members, as it is a detailed summary of issues facing North American birds and very specific plans to meet the challenges. Most sobering is the fact that climate change and habitat loss will put half our North American species at risk. To counter the threat, NAS has developed certain conservation priorities.

Briefly, the conservation priorities include:

Coasts - Restore and protect coastal wetlands and marshes.

Working lands - Work with private landowners and governmental agencies to increase the quality of habitat on privately managed lands (buffer zones, for example).

Climate - Identify and expand high quality bird habitat and “strong holds” to ensure survival in the era of climate change, to influence public policy regarding energy use, and to encourage more citizens/members to become involved on this issue.

Bird-friendly communities - Promote the use of native plants, bird-friendly building design etc.

Water - Manage, protect and restore habitat along rivers, wetlands and deltas.

As we move forward, the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society’s board and the conservation committee will be discussing what we can do to address the problems birds face and to find more local solutions. We welcome and encourage your ideas.

EARTH FRIENDLY RECIPE VEGAN VEGETABLE COUSCOUS

Moroccan tradition says to serve couscous with seven vegetables. As we go into high vegetable season, here’s a way to enjoy all the bounty - plus turmeric is being touted as an anti-inflammatory and antioxidant.
Serves 4

What You Need:

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 carrots, cut into 1/4-inch slices
1 red bell pepper, seeded & cut into 1/4-inch dice
1 pound small zucchini, halved lengthwise, cut into 1/2-inch slices
1 bunch scallions, trimmed and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1 pound plum tomatoes, chopped
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
4 cups water
1 (16-ounce) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
1 cup frozen peas, thawed
1/4 cup minced parsley or cilantro
1 (10-ounce box) couscous

What You Do:

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan. Add the carrots and cook, covered, until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the red bell pepper, zucchini, scallions and tomatoes, along with the salt, cinnamon, turmeric and black pepper. Add the water and bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer until the vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes. Add the chickpeas, peas and parsley or cilantro, and cook 10 minutes longer. Keep warm while you prepare the couscous.

2. Prepare the couscous according to the package directions. Mound the hot couscous onto a serving platter and surround with vegetables, using a slotted spoon. Taste broth to adjust the seasoning, adding more salt if necessary. Serve the broth on the side.

*From the Veg News e-newsletter,
Robin Robertson, June 29, 2016*



WE HAVE NEW NIAS T-SHIRTS!
Available for purchase at NIAS meetings

T-shirts are certified preshrunk organic cotton in natural color.



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.

_____ National Membership \$20

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 _____

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

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Membership | Bernard Lischwe

Field Trips | Mary Blackmore

Sustainable Agriculture

Richard Benning, Mary Blackmore,

Laura Dufford and Heidi Thorp

Newsletter Editor | Dan Barron

1706 Johnson St - La Crosse WI 54601

815-541-3261 - dan@beewise.us

nwilaudubon@gmail.com



BIRD SEED SALE ALERT

This year's Bird Seed Sale will be held October 20-22. Sale fliers will be mailed in September.

If you can volunteer to help sort orders or deliver seed, please call 815-238-9259 or 815-938-3204.

THANK YOU!



Our May Bird Festival volunteers who helped with set-up, provided refreshments, led tours, loaned equipment, staffed the welcome tent and cleaned up:

Kara Gallup, Laura Dufford, Richard Benning, Tim and Teresa Smith, Mary Blackmore, Rex Sides, Chris Kruger, Terri Clark, Paul Brown and Kaitlyn Mcwethy.

Prairie stewardship volunteers from May 5 to June 27:

Mary Blackmore, Kara Gallup, Anne Straight, Harlan and Judy Corrie, John and Anita Nienhuis, Juliet D'Souza, Merry Blake, Randy and Nancy Ocken, Bernard Lischwe, Carol and Fred Redmore, Alan Nowicki, Willem Djistelbergen, Dave Derwent and Bob Remer.

Lynn Feaver and Rex Sides for mowing trails at both of our preserves.

Sterling Taylor for field mowing thistles at Silver Creek.

Recent field trip leaders:

Mark Keister, Laura Dufford, Chris Kruger and Mary Blackmore.

NIAS Board Retreat Committee: *Mary Blackmore, Nancy Ocken and Teresa Smith.*

Education Chair Juliet D'Souza for her hard work and creativity in organizing wonderful activities this past year, reaching hundreds of people.

**Northwest Illinois
Audubon Society**

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When using either switchboard, simply ask to be connected to the legislator's office.

FEDERAL

Senator Richard Durbin

Kluczynski Building 38th Floor
230 S. Dearborn, Chicago, IL 60604
www.durbin.senate.gov/contact.cfm

Senator Mark Kirk

230 S. Dearborn, Suite 3900, Chicago, IL 60604
www.kirk.senate.gov/?p=comment_on_legislation

16th District Rep. Adam Kinzinger

628 Columbus Street, Suite 507, Ottawa, IL 61350
<https://kinzingerforms.house.gov/email-adam/>

17th District Rep. Cheri Bustos

100 19th Street, Suite 101, Rock Island, IL 61201
<http://bustos.house.gov/contact>

STATE

45th District Sen. Tim Bivins

50 W. Douglas Street, Suite 1001, Freeport, IL 61032
senatorbivins@grics.net

36th District Sen. Mike Jacobs

1114 4th Avenue, Silvis, IL 61282
jacobs@senatedem.state.il.us

89th District Rep. Brian Stewart

50 W. Douglas Street, Suite 1001, Freeport, IL 61032
repstewart@gmail.com

90th District Rep. Tom Demmer

1221 Currency Street, Suite B, Rochelle, IL 61068
rep@tomdemmer.com