



OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 2022

# NORTHWEST ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY



**Pileated Woodpecker**  
*Dryocopus pileatus*

*A chapter of the National Audubon Society*

The Pileated Woodpecker's primary food is carpenter ants, supplemented by other ants, woodboring beetle larvae, termites, and other insects such as flies, spruce budworm, caterpillars, cockroaches, and grasshoppers. They also eat wild fruits and nuts, including greenbrier, hackberry, sassafras, blackberries, sumac berries, poison ivy, holly, dogwood, persimmon, and elderberry. In some diet studies, ants constituted 40 percent of the diet, and up to 97 percent in some individuals. Occasionally, Pileated Woodpeckers visit backyard bird feeders for seeds or suet.

www.nwilaudubon.org

## NIAS MONTHLY PROGRAMS

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

**Please note: schedule and location of programs are subject to change due to COVID-19 restrictions; please see newsletter and website for up-to-date information.**

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

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

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

*Please join us!*

## INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER:

2. Calendar Considerations
3. Programs, Events, Field Trips
4. Banquet, Why Voting Matters
5. Butterfly Festival
6. Heartfelt, Bluebirds, Fall Stewardship
7. Thank You!

About Bird Information:  
[birds.cornell.edu](http://birds.cornell.edu)

Bird Photo: William Morris  
Program photos provided by the presenters.

## THE CLIMATE AND EQUITABLE JOBS ACT (CEJA)

*An overview*

**Presenter Candy Colby**

**OCTOBER 4TH  
PROGRAM AT 7:00PM**

**St John United Church of Christ, Freeport**

The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, passed by the Illinois Legislature and signed into law by Governor Pritzker in September 2021, is ground-breaking legislation that positions Illinois as an important state leader in clean energy, climate action and environmental justice.

Candy is a member of the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society and the Environmental Study Group (ESG), a local group whose focus is to promote sustainable practices in NW Illinois. She grew up in Texas and witnessed the environmental destruction associated



**RESUMING  
IN PERSON  
MEETINGS!**

with the oil and gas industries. Candy moved to Freeport in 2014 and became involved in the Clean Jobs Coalition, which worked tirelessly to pass CEJA.

Matt Harvey of the Citizens Utility Board, a consumer advocacy group, will also be present to speak briefly about CUB and to answer any questions related to taking advantage of energy efficiency opportunities and community solar.

## AMERICA'S RED ROCK WILDERNESS

*Fighting Climate Change  
and Saving Wilderness in Utah*

**Presenter Clayton Daughenbaugh**

**NOVEMBER 1ST  
PROGRAM AT 7:00PM**

**St John United Church of Christ, Freeport**



The red rock country of southern Utah is among the most spectacular landscapes in the world. It's also the largest network of unprotected wilderness remaining in the lower 48 states. National Audubon has declared a significant portion of it an Important Bird Area primarily due to the habitat for the Mexican Spotted Owl. Protecting it would make a vital contribution to the fight against climate change and securing Earth's biodiversity from the accelerating loss of species. The region is the ancestral homeland for Native Americans who have become important advocates for its protection. Recent years have seen the loss and return of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante National Monuments as well as the passage

of the largest wilderness bill in two decades. But much more needs to be done.

The presentation will include an award winning 14-minute film.

Clayton Daughenbaugh is the Organizing Director and Midwest Regional Organizer for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. He is also a volunteer national leader with the Sierra Club on wildlands protection efforts where he received the William Colby Award which is their highest award for volunteer leadership in the organization. Clayton spent his childhood in New Orleans and presently resides in Berwyn, IL.

# CALENDAR CONSIDERATIONS

**P** **October 4** – Monthly program, 7:00 p.m. (see page 1 for more details)

**E** **October 8** – Oaktober, 9 – 10 a.m., Oakdale Nature Preserve, 4433 S. Cranes Grove Rd., Freeport, IL (see page 3 for more details)

**E** **October 9** – Full Moon Campfire at our Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve. Stroll the trails at 6 p.m. to observe plants and animals; the campfire follows at 6:30. Clear skies should give us a spectacular moon show. S'mores will be provided. Bring a lawn chair, flashlight and water.

The preserve is located about 3 miles southwest of Forreton in the southeast corner of West Grove and Freeport Rds. The parking lot is off of West Grove Rd. If weather is questionable call Mary at 815-938-3204.

**O** **October 13 and 14** – NIAS annual Bird Seed Sale Fundraiser: Deliveries and Freeport pickups at O'Mara Transport Company.

**O** **October 15** – NIAS annual Bird Seed Sale Fundraiser: Stockton, Forreton, Davis and Dakota pickups only.

**S** **October 23** – Prairie Seed Collecting at our Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserve, 2-4 p.m. Tools, snacks and guidance provided. Bring water and insect repellent.

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 the weather is questionable call Mary at 815-938-3204.

For information on more seed collecting opportunities see the article on page 3.

**S** **October 27** – Prairie Seed Processing at the Deluxe Nienhuis Shed, 1-4 p.m. (see page 3 for more details)

**P** **November 1** – Monthly program, 7:00 p.m. (see page 1 for more details)

**S** **November 6** – Prairie Seed Processing at the Deluxe Nienhuis Shed, 1-4 p.m. (see page 3 for more details)

**E** **November 12** – A walking sense journal, 4-5 p.m., Oakdale Nature Preserve, 4433 S. Cranes Grove Rd., Freeport, IL. (see page 3 for more details)

**S** **November 15** – Prairie Seed Processing at the Deluxe Nienhuis Shed, 9 a.m. - noon. (see page 3 for more details)

**M** Meeting

**F** Field Trip

**S** Stewardship

**P** Program

**E** Event

**O** Other



## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

I remember back to the March 2020 Board meeting of the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society. There was discussion on the upcoming banquet and other events we were planning for the spring. A new word had entered our vocabulary and several "what-ifs" were mentioned by some Board members. Of course the new word was COVID, and little did we know what the next two years would entail.

Now here our Chapter is in October 2022 alive and well. Many of us have lost friends and relatives to COVID, and our lifestyles have been altered. However, through the trials and turbulence of the last two years the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society is strong and vibrant. Some of the activities we offer are what people were looking for during the midst of the pandemic. After CDC guidelines forced us to cancel all person to person activities during the first spring and summer of the pandemic we resumed some outdoor events in fall

2020 with required safeguards in effect. Our zoom monthly programs were made available to any and all, and probably reached some who do not normally attend in person. Our Newsletter arrived in your mailbox on schedule and full of great pictures and articles. We continued bird seed sales and stewardship activities at our two preserves with safety measures in place. Because of our efforts the city of Freeport officially became a "Bird City." We partnered with other local organizations to bring Christian Cooper to Freeport to talk about birding and diversity. Now our bird walks, field trips and outdoor educational activities are back in full swing.

This resiliency of the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society is in no small part due to the time, effort and expertise of numerous Chapter members. I will refrain from mentioning them by name due to the danger of errors of omission. You know who you are, and others know who you are. Our Chapter is going strong because of you, and gratitudes are extended by all. We can expect the future to include more challenging times, though at present we cannot envision what they will be or when

they will occur. However as long as we remain steadfast, like the last two years, we will endure. Long live the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society.

*Richard Benning, President,  
Northwest Illinois Audubon Society*

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Virginia Thorn – Davis

Leon Kraut – Freeport

Eloise Barber – Freeport

Hazel Speer – Hanover

Karn Desmond – Lena

Jewel Blake – Mount Morris

Clea Arbogast – Polo

Sharon Webster – Scales Mound

# PROGRAMS, EVENTS AND FIELD TRIPS

## OAKTOBER

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8, 9–10 AM**

*Oakdale Nature Preserve, 4433 S. Cranes Grove Rd., Freeport, IL*

*Coordinator: Adam Moderow,  
815-541-5842*

Oak trees are a special part of our local ecosystem. Most of us see an oak tree every day, even if we don't realize it. This Oaktober, our program will focus on these trees that too often go overlooked. We will take a hike and learn how to identify oak trees, (and some others,) learn about how they have adapted to and shaped our environment and discuss their role as a host species. What better place to celebrate Oaktober than Oakdale? Remember to dress for the shifting temperature of October. Meet by the Mogle building, just off of the parking lot.

*Contact Adam Moderow at [adamoderow@gmail.com](mailto:adamoderow@gmail.com) or at 815-541-5842 to register in case it becomes necessary to limit the number of participants.*

## A WALKING SENSE JOURNAL

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 4–5 PM**

*Oakdale Nature Preserve, 4433 S. Cranes Grove Rd., Freeport, IL*

*Coordinator: Adam Moderow,  
815-541-5842*

This guided journaling exercise will focus on how nature appeals to our different senses. We will walk through Oakdale, pausing along the way, and focus on how our individual senses interpret the natural world around us. Getting out into nature as it shifts and quiets in preparation for winter can be a wonderful tool for reflection as we do the same. Feel free to bring your own notebook and writing utensil. We should be done before dark but be prepared for less light than when we started. Remember to dress warmly. Meet in the shelter/parking area of the Newell Tract (the part of Oakdale on the west side of Crane's Grove Rd.)

*Contact Adam Moderow at [adamoderow@gmail.com](mailto:adamoderow@gmail.com) or at 815-541-5842 to register in case it becomes necessary to limit the number of participants.*

## FALL PRAIRIE SEED COLLECTING

Every September and October, we collect prairie seeds at our preserves for planting in less diverse areas of those same sites. Two prairie seed collecting outings, both 2-4 p.m., have been scheduled:

- **September 25 at Elkhorn Creek**
- **October 23 at Silver Creek**

**We plan to have many more collecting opportunities as weather permits, using our contact list to notify volunteers.**

To get on this list, e-mail Nancy Ocken at [mocken@gmail.com](mailto:mocken@gmail.com) or call Mary Blackmore at 815-938-3204. We will provide as much notice as possible.

No experience? No problem! Seed collecting is an easy, leisurely task. Novices are always welcome. There will always be one or more leaders to point out which plants to pick seed from. Equipment, gloves and snacks are provided. Typically we collect for a two-hour period of time at one of our preserves in late morning or afternoon.

Be sure to wear long pants, long sleeves and a hat. Please bring water and insect repellent.

## PROCESSING SEEDS FROM OUR PRESERVES

Join us for prairie seed processing at the Nienhuis Deluxe Shed on **October 27** from 1-4 p.m., **November 6** from 1-4 p.m., and **November 15** from 9 a.m.-noon. For many years John and Anita generously have provided this great set-up with many tables for our work, delicious snacks and, if needed, a fire in the woodstove.

Seed processing is easy and fun; no experience is necessary. It's sort of like a botanical quilting bee, with lots of good conversation.

Dust masks will be provided (or bring your

own) since we raise considerable dust while rubbing seedheads across screens. Masks also will provide viral protection. All mint species will be processed in an outdoor workspace.

We hope to return to our traditional potluck at the conclusion of our work on November 15, but this will be finalized closer to that date and will depend on local pandemic conditions. If you'd like to join us on November 15 call Anita in advance (815-443-2401).

*Directions to the Nienhuis home at 3350 S. Mill Grove Rd., Pearl City: Take Pearl City Rd. west from Freeport about 7 miles. Turn left (south) on Block Rd. In a little over 1 mile turn left (south) on Mill Grove Rd. The Nienhuis driveway is on your right, less than ½ mile down Mill Grove Rd. and directly across from the entrance to a campground.*



*Pods and seeds of Cream Wild Indigo (Baptisia bracteata) collected from our Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve. | photo by Mary Blackmore*



# 2022 ANNUAL BANQUET

***Thank you to all who donated and bid on items at our recent banquet silent auction.***

More than \$920 was raised to support local Chapter activities and our two preserves – Elkhorn Creek and Silver Creek Biodiversity.

Items were donated by Gary Gordon, Richard Benning, Dan Barron, Sarah Barron, Laura Dufford, Phil & Ann Swalve, Merry Blake, Pat & Chuck Wemstrom, Kerry Kurtz, Linnea Koch, Jim Duis, Anita Nienhuis, Dave Derwent Estate, John Walt, Juliet Moderow, Jim Bade, Sharon Shaw Estate, Shey Lowman, Betty Mickel, Severson Dells, Elizabeth Boettner, Tina Sellers Cannova, Mary Blackmore, Sara Rousch, Tim & Teresa Smith, Linda Black, Bob & Kara Gallup, Chris Kruger, and Michael & Margaret Sheppard.

## ***Thank you for helping with the 2022 Banquet***

Mary Blackmore, Teresa and Tim Smith, Deborah and Bernard Lischwe, Pam and Jim Richards, Laura Dufford, Richard Benning, Chris Kruger, Kara Gallup, Paul Brown, Anita Nienhuis, Debbie Barron, Juliet Moderow



## **WHY VOTING MATTERS**

As Audubon members we're naturally extremely concerned about the environmental problems facing birds and all life, especially the looming shadow of climate change and the many disasters we're already seeing playing out. We look for ways to make a difference, but sometimes have a sinking feeling that our efforts are ineffectual.

Creating the healthy and sustainable future we all want depends to a large extent on

policies enacted by our federal, state and local governments...obviously, therefore, the one huge difference we can all make is to vote... and to vote with thoughtfulness and intentionality.

Samuel Adams stated that voting is one of the most solemn trusts in human society. Our vote must be informed by knowledge of the candidates' ideas and stance on the issues important to us. We can review our state representatives' voting records on environmental issues by visiting the Illinois Environmental Council's website (IEC scorecard) IEC Scorecard - Illinois Environmental Council ([ilenviro.org](http://ilenviro.org)), and we can view federal representatives'

voting records by visiting the League of Conservation Voters scorecard League of Conservation Voters Scorecard ([lcv.org](http://lcv.org)). Regardless of party, our vote can support the candidates who represent our values as environmental advocates.

So, come November, be sure to vote and encourage your friends and family to do the same! Together we can bring about the future we want for ourselves, our families and all the marvelous beings who share the planet with us.

*Candy Colby  
Conservation Committee*



# 2022 BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL AT ELKHORN CREEK BIODIVERSITY PRESERVE

## *Butterfly Festival Fun*

*Mary Blackmore  
Photos by Teresa Smith*

The weather was great, the prairie forb blooms were gorgeous, and the people returned for our Butterfly Festival on July 30, the first we've had since 2019. Participants had fun netting and identifying butterflies, and enjoyed delicious refreshments in our shady hospitality area.

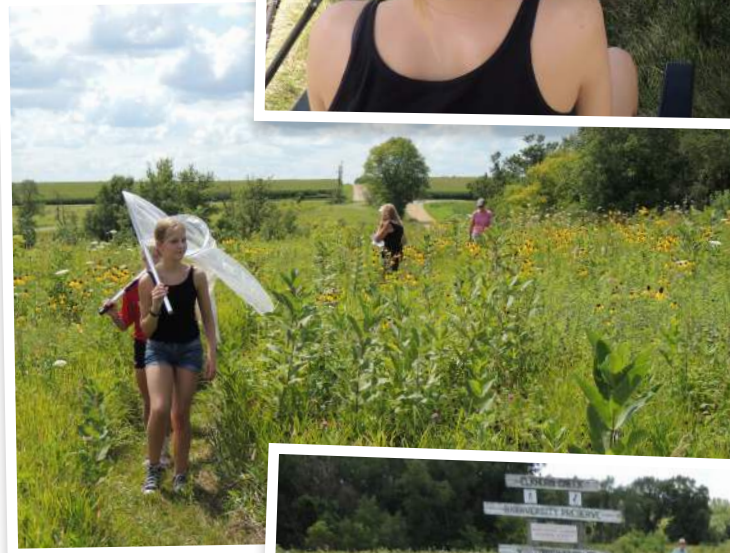
We observed 10 species of butterflies and skippers: Meadow Fritillary, Monarch, Eastern Tailed-Blue, Buckeye, Tiger Swallowtail, Black Swallowtail, Cabbage White, Red Admiral, Comma and Silver-Spotted Skipper. Though down a bit from our festival average of 12 species, we got some close looks at several species, notably the Comma and Tiger Swallowtail. Special thanks go to our tour leaders Richard Benning and John Walt.

Many other volunteers contributed to the success of this event by providing refreshments, staffing the welcome tent, loaning equipment and setting up/taking down our hospitality area. Thanks go to Tim and Teresa Smith, Jeff Shriver, Mary Blackmore, Kara and Bob Gallup, Chris Kruger and Judy Corrie.

***We look forward to next year's  
festival on July 29!***

## **QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR MEMBERSHIP?**

Contact Teresa Smith at 815-238-3963  
or [timtreetsmith@gmail.com](mailto:timtreetsmith@gmail.com)



# HEARTFELT

In this 10th anniversary year of our Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserve, I have recalled many fond memories of this very special place. Two really stand out: getting to know Joanne Tarbox Styles and finding hope and inspiration on a Mother's Day morning in 2018.

Joanne Tarbox Styles was the wonderful woman who donated to our chapter the land that became our Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserve. Generosity, graciousness and happiness were only a few of her admirable traits. Every time I saw her she expressed deep thanks for our stewardship of her former beloved farm. "I love this place with all my heart," she declared to us. Joanne was astounded at the number of species we were finding at the preserve, especially the birds. Shortly before her death at age 98 in 2016, I visited her at Pinecrest Manor in Mt. Morris. Even though she was in a weakened state, she still showed that same enthusiasm and

gratitude for our work at Silver Creek. Joanne was one of a kind and she made us better people.

Mother's Day, 2018, was a time of reflection for me, but also tinged with sadness. I had experienced a series of losses of loved ones and I needed to do something on this special day to focus on what was all around me, as well as what I had lost. So I packed up binocs, camera, snack and a lawn chair, drove to the preserve and walked the trail to the north branch of Silver Creek, a location where the water is clear and fast-flowing. At first I noticed the calming effect of the music of the creek. Then I started seeing and hearing birds everywhere! While Mother's Day weekend is typically good for spotting spring migrating birds, this Mother's Day was exceptional. With every sighting and call I thought of my loved ones, including Joanne, who would have thoroughly enjoyed the color and music. I even got to observe and then photograph a Northern Waterthrush as it foraged for aquatic insects among the rocks in the creek.

I thought of the perils that this bird had navigated to get here and what challenges were yet to come. Then I realized how the preserve had provided just what the bird needed and what I needed on that day.

Mary Blackmore



Photo by Mary Blackmore

## BLUEBIRDS RETURN TO ELKHORN CREEK

This was a much better year for the nest boxes our Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve. Bluebirds returned for the first time in several years and successfully nested in 2 boxes! We also recorded 3 broods of Tree Swallows and, while not a target species, 3 broods of House Wrens.

European Tree Sparrows (ETS), aggressive nest box competitors, were somewhat less active this year. They attempted to nest in fewer boxes and ended their attempts much earlier in the nesting season (June 9 compared to July 30 in 2021). We continue to remove ETS nests on a regular basis.

Once again the blackfly season was relatively mild and of short duration. Blackflies can be a major source of mortality for both Eastern Bluebird and Tree Swallow chicks.

Many thanks go to our nest box monitors, Kara Gallup and Mary Blackmore, for their numerous monitoring visits during the 2022 nesting season.

## FALL PRESERVES STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship will be scheduled on shorter notice by using our volunteer contact list. To get on the list call Mary Blackmore at 815-938-3204 or e-mail Nancy Ocken at rnocken@gmail.com. We will try to provide as much notice as possible. We plan to focus on honeysuckle and Multiflora Rose removal as well as trail-trimming at both preserves.

Volunteers should wear long pants, long sleeves and a hat. Bring water, insect repellent and gloves. Snacks, equipment and guidance will be provided.

Mary Blackmore

Every Vote Counts

## We Can't, But You Can!

Due to our chapter's 501(c)(3) non-profit IRS status, we are prohibited from engaging in election year activities. This includes, but is not limited to, endorsing candidates, participating in and donating to campaigns, and publishing candidate opinion pieces in this newsletter.

While our chapter cannot participate in those types of activities, our members as individuals certainly may do so. We encourage you to include environmental issues, such as climate change, in your decision process as you vote for the candidates of your choice on November 8.



**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 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

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** | Richard Benning  
**Vice-President** | Laura Dufford  
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**Board members At-Large:**

Elizabeth Boettner, Jeremy Dixon,  
Carol Redmore, Fred Redmore,  
Fran Shriver, Steve Simpson

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**Education** | Adam Moderow  
**Publicity** | Leah Dixon  
**Field Trips** | Chris Kruger

**Equity Diversity Inclusion**

Gary Gordon and Juliet Moderow

**President Emeritus** | Gary Gordon

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815-541-3261 | dan@driftlessflora.com

**[nwilaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:nwilaudubon@gmail.com)**

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# THANK YOU!

Stewardship volunteers since mid-July: Tim and Teresa Smith, Bob and Kara Gallup, Mary and Morgan Blackmore, Kayse Rushford, Keri Rainsberger, Pam Richards, Paul Brown, Juliet Moderow, Nancy Ocken, Judy Corrie, Clea Arbogast and Merry Blake.

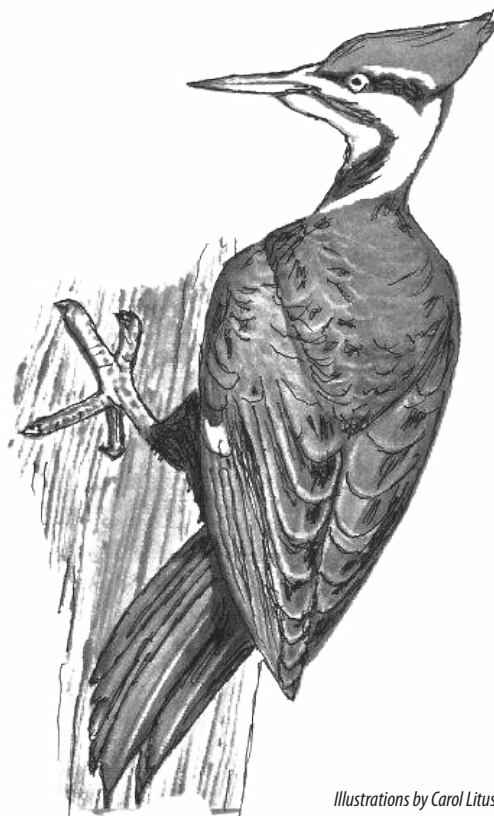
Recent field trip and event leaders: Adam Moderow, Ken Beach, Teresa Smith and John Walt.

Tim and Teresa Smith for chainsawing and removing fallen trees across trails at both of our preserves.

For recent financial donations: Richard Benning, Elizabeth Boettner, David and Virginia DeSwarte, Suzanne and Phillip Falconer, Betty Mickel, Bob Remer, Kayse Rushford, Jeff and Fran Shriver, Chuck and Patty Wemstrom, Jack Wilcox, Paul Brown, and Jeff and Fran Shriver.

Ann and Phil Swalve along with the Jane Addams Land Foundation for hosting Northwest Illinois Audubon at the Butterfly Farm.

Volunteers and supporters of our annual banquet (see page 4).



Illustrations by Carol Litus

**Northwest Illinois  
Audubon Society**

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Freeport, IL 61032-0771

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

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**ADDRESSES/EMAILS OF YOUR LEGISLATORS**

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*When using the state switchboard simply ask to be connected to the legislators office.*

*When using the capitol switchboard follow the series of prompts.*

**FEDERAL**

**Senator Richard Durbin**

230 S. Dearborn, Suite 3892  
Chicago, IL 60604  
[www.durbin.senate.gov/contact/](http://www.durbin.senate.gov/contact/)

**Senator Tammy Duckworth**

230 S Dearborn Suite 3900, Chicago, IL 60604  
312-886-3506 | [www.duckworth.senate.gov/connect/](http://www.duckworth.senate.gov/connect/)

**16th District Rep. Adam Kinzinger**

628 Columbus Street, Suite 507, Ottawa, IL 61350  
[www.kinzinger.house.gov/contact/](http://www.kinzinger.house.gov/contact/)

**17th District Rep. Cheri Bustos**

2401 4th Ave., Rock Island IL 61201  
<http://bustos.house.gov/contact>

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**45th District Sen. Brian Stewart**

50 W. Douglas Street, Suite 1001, Freeport, IL 61032  
[stewart@ilhousegop.org](mailto:stewart@ilhousegop.org)

**36th District Sen. Neil Anderson**

1523 47th Ave, Suite 3, Moline, IL 61265  
[senatorneilanderson@gmail.com](mailto:senatorneilanderson@gmail.com)

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**90th District Rep. Tom Demmer**

105 E First Street, Suite 110, Dixon IL 61021  
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**71st District Rep. Tony McCombie**

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