



APRIL – MAY 2021

NORTHWEST ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY

A chapter of the National Audubon Society

Rusty Blackbird
Euphagus carolinus

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 for specific monthly details, special events or any changes to the usual time and place.

Please join us!

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Rusty Blackbird is listed as a Common Bird in Steep Decline on the 2014 State of the Birds Report. Low densities and remote breeding habitat (in the boreal forests of the far north) make clear determination of trends difficult. Scientists have formed the Rusty Blackbird Working Group, which tries to get a better handle on populations by organizing birders to look for and report Rusty Blackbirds during specific dates during the year, particularly spring migration. It's not clear what has caused the population declines, but loss of wet woodland habitat through drainage, clearcutting, and conversion to agriculture is a possibility—particularly in the southeastern U.S. where some 80 percent of the population winters. The historically severe hunting of beavers across North America may also have reduced habitat for Rusty Blackbirds by reducing the number of beaver ponds; the resurgence of beaver populations may be restoring some of this habitat. Rusty Blackbirds from northeastern North America have been recorded with unusually high mercury contamination and could be contributing to their decline in this region. | Text: allaboutbirds.org | ID photo: Vincent P. Lucas (leppyone)

THE APRIL AND MAY PROGRAMS WILL BE VIRTUAL PROGRAMS, PRESENTED VIA ZOOM.

For all individuals who want to join the program, please email nwilaudubon@gmail.com to receive the link to join this Zoom program. These programs will begin at 7:00 pm, first with any chapter announcements from the president and board members, followed by our presenter. There will be time for questions and discussions at the end. These programs are open to the public!



HIKING THE PACIFIC CREST TRAIL WITH GREER BLACK

Northwest Illinois Audubon Society
Virtual Program through Zoom
Tuesday, April 6th – 7:00pm

Walking over 2,100 miles of the Appalachian Trail and finding that wasn't enough for Greer Black, he then a few years later walked over 2,600 miles of the Pacific Coast Trail. The trail starts in Mexico and goes to Canada through California, Oregon, and Washington. The Pacific Crest Trail webpage describes the trail as "revealing the beauty of the desert, unfolds the glaciated expanses of the Sierra Nevada, travels deep forests, and provides commanding vistas of volcanic peaks in the Cascade Range. The trail symbolizes everything there is to love—and protect—in the Western United States." Zoom in to listen to the adventure and lessons learned on Greer's amazing journey.

Greer currently lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He expects to receive his J.D. from Marquette University in May 2021. He still enjoys backpacking, and his most recent trip was 175 miles on the Ozark Highlands Trail in Arkansas. | 4/6 Program photo provided by the presenter

FOREST PARK OWLS: HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

Northwest Illinois Audubon Society
Virtual Program through Zoom
Tuesday, May 4th – 7:00pm



Mark H.X. Glenshaw is an award-winning naturalist who has closely observed and documented the lives of Great Horned Owls in Forest Park in St. Louis, Missouri since December 2005. Mark does extensive outreach work with the owls. He leads dozens of owl prowls each year. He also gives scores of talks each year across Missouri and Illinois and beyond to a wide range of different institutions and organizations.

Mark's talk, Forest Park Owls: Hiding In Plain Sight, will cover how he found these owls, basic facts about the species, and the different behaviors he has been able to see and document with photos and videos to illustrate these behaviors. | 5/4 Program photo provided by Mark H.X. Glenshaw

CALENDAR CONSIDERATIONS

Due to the uncertainty of future cancellations associated with COVID-19, please check our website calendar before any scheduled event or call any leader on the event. If you would like to be notified by email, please send a message to nwilaudubon@gmail.com to be placed on an email contact list.

S April through May – Stewardship work sessions (p.11)

M April 6 – Northwest Illinois Audubon Society, Virtual Program through Zoom 7:00pm (p.1)

F April 7 – Bird walk, 8-11 a.m. (p.4)

F April 9 – Field Trip: Blooming Pasque Flowers at the Freeport Prairie, 3-4 p.m. (p.3)

April 11 – 22 – Virtual Film Screening of “RACING EXTINCTION” (p.3)

April 22 – discussion of the film “RACING EXTINCTION” (p.3)

F April 13 – Bird walk, 8-11 a.m. (p.4)

O April 17 – Crane Count (p.4)

O April 20 – 7:00 p.m., HCC Boyer Colloquium: “Water, Water Everywhere: Farming and Local Community Resilience in the Face of Climate Challenges”. Visit highland.edu for details.

F April 22 – Happy Earth Day! Bird walk, 8-11 a.m. (p.4)

F April 28 – Bird walk, 8-11 a.m. (p.4)

O May 2 – Annual Birdathon Fundraiser! Your pledge is MOST welcome! See page 5 for our list of birders and for details about making your contribution that will help birds on their wintering grounds, migration corridors and nesting habitats.

M May 4 – Northwest Illinois Audubon Society, Virtual Program through Zoom 7:00pm (p.1)

F May 5 – Bird walk, 8-11 a.m. (p.4)

F May 8 – Field Trip: Wildflowers and Birds of the Palisades, 9 a.m. – noon. (p.3)

E May 8 – World Migratory Bird Day event, Taylor Park; 11:00 a.m. (p. 9)

F May 11 – Field Trip: Bald Hill Prairie Preserve, 9 a.m. – noon. (p.3)

F May 14 – Bird walk, 8-11 a.m. (p.4)

F May 20 – Bird walk, 8-11 a.m. (p.4)

F May 22 – Field Trip: An Evening of Birding at Lost Mound, 6:30-9:30 p.m. (p.3)

F May 25 – Bird walk, 8-11 a.m. (p.4)

E May 26 – Full moon campfire at our Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserve. At 7 p.m. we'll take a leisurely stroll to observe blooming plants and resident birds. The campfire will start at 8 p.m. S'mores packets will be provided.

Bring a lawn chair, flashlight and water (if desired). Please bring your mask for when physical distancing is not possible. The preserve is located about 2 miles south of Leaf River (S. Main St. in Leaf River becomes Leaf River Rd.). The preserve parking lot is just off of Leaf River Rd. If the weather is questionable call Mary at 815-938-3204.

E June 5 – Earth Fest in downtown Freeport. 10:00 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.. Live birds, exhibits and activities. (p.10)

M Meeting

F Field Trip

S Stewardship

P Program

E Event

O Other

THE PRESIDENT'S TWEET

I'm going to keep this short and simple as there is so much good info packed into the newsletter I don't want to take away your time from reading everything else. We continue to move ahead with our spring and summer plans and it looks like the ramping up of vaccine delivery is just around the corner. We are cautiously optimistic some of our future plans for spring, summer and the fall may look more normal though we are going to continue to play it safe and follow the science.

This newsletter has some personal calls to action and we are excited to see how it prompts you to consider making changes to the way we consume.

The exciting time to be a birder, the spring migration, is just around the corner and we have birding events scheduled for late March and April into May. We will continue

with our excellent Zoom programs each month, though we have made the difficult but necessary decision to cancel our Spring Banquet.

Locally we have a couple of exciting opportunities to look forward to and we will be providing more detail in the near future. I can provide some info to include the announcement we are working towards making Freeport a Bird City, USA. There are many steps involved in this process and many benefits to achieving this goal.

In addition Freeport will be hosting a Birds in Art festival during April, May and June and this year and our celebration of Earth Day will move to June 5th as part of the festival.

Admittedly there is also excitement on a National level with the new Secretary

of the Department of Interior being nominated. We believe Deb Haaland is a great choice to lead that Department. The Department of Interior has oversight to over 500 Million acres of public land and Deb Haaland is the 1st Native American to run the Department of Interior and she is also the 1st Native American Cabinet Secretary in US History. I am not sure what took so long, but we are hoping for a more reasonable approach to the use of these lands under her supervision.

COVID is still here so please continue to remain vigilant and safe and we look forward to opportunities in the future to share time together, whether it be by Zoom or in some Socially Distanced fashion. (G3)

– Gary G Gordon
NWIL Audubon President

FIELD TRIPS AND EVENTS

COVID-19 Precautions: Be sure to bring your face covering for when you are unable to social distance. Additionally, optical equipment, including spotting scopes, cannot be shared.

BLOOMING PASQUE FLOWERS AT THE FREEPORT PRAIRIE

Friday, April 9, 3:00–4:00 p.m.

Leader: Mary Blackmore
815-938-3204

Join us as we admire one of the prairie's harbingers of spring, the Pasque Flower. Unlike the crocus it resembles, a Pasque Flower, *Anemone patens*, is a member of the buttercup family. In early spring the plant sends up a flower stalk in advance of leaves so what you see are delicate pale violet blooms nestled in the muted tan tangle of last year's prairie grasses. Come and see how Pasque Flower blooms actually move to track the sun. Please contact Mary if you plan to attend. This trip will only happen if the flowers are blooming.

We'll meet in the prairie's parking lot just off of Walnut Rd, at 3:00 p.m.

WILDFLOWERS AND BIRDS OF THE PALISADES

Saturday, May 8, 9:00 a.m. – noon

Leader: Mary Blackmore
815-938-3204

Each spring the Mississippi Palisades State Park just north of Savanna, is a destination for birders and botanists alike. Due to its unique topography, unusual birds such as the Yellow-throated Warbler and Northern Parula Warbler, and uncommon plants like Large-Flowered Trillium and Amethyst Shooting Star are found.

Bring your binoculars and a sack lunch if you would like to eat at the park after the field trip. Parts of the trail we'll be on are steep and/or narrow so a hiking stick may be helpful.

Meet at the first parking lot inside the south entrance to the Mississippi Palisades State Park, about a mile north of Savanna just off of Hwy. 84. **Please confirm your attendance by calling Mary.**

A STROLL AT BALD HILL PRAIRIE PRESERVE

Tuesday, May 11, 9 a.m. – noon

Leader: Mary Blackmore
815-938-3204

This unit of the Byron Forest Preserve District in Ogle county is the site of the Illinois record Eastern Cottonwood tree. In addition to admiring the cottonwood, we'll be looking for wildflowers and both resident and migrating songbirds on our walk through this grassland habitat.

Bring your binoculars, insect repellent and water (if desired). Be sure to wear a hat, long sleeves, long pants (light colored is best) and socks long enough to tuck your pant legs into (for tick avoidance).

Meet at our Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserve (for directions see Spring Stewardship on page ??) at 9 a.m. We'll car-caravan to Bald Hill, only a 10 minute drive east. **Confirm your attendance by calling Mary.**

AN EVENING OF BIRDING AT LOST MOUND

Saturday, May 22, 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Leader: Mary Blackmore
815-938-3204

Join us as we travel alongside sand prairies, sand savannas and the mighty Mississippi in search of birds at the Lost Mound Unit of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge just north of Savanna. Of primary interest will be the awesome courtship display of the Common Nighthawk, as well as vocalization of both Eastern Whip-poor-wills and American Woodcocks. There will be enough time to observe many of the grassland species of Lost Mound as well.

Meet in the parking area of the Fish and Wildlife office building at Lost Mound. The refuge entrance road is about nine miles north of Savanna on Hwy. 84. Turn left

onto the refuge entrance road, cross the railroad tracks and continue up the hill. At the intersection at the top of the hill turn right and continue for about ½ mile. The parking area is on your left.

We'll car-caravan on the paved roads and do little or no walking. Bring binoculars. The timing sequence will be songbirds, Common Nighthawk, American Woodcock and at the end, Whip-poor-wills. If you want to leave the caravan for an earlier departure you may do so.

Call Mary to confirm your attendance.

VIRTUAL FILM SCREENING OF "RACING EXTINCTION"

Watch at home anytime between
April 11 and April 22

**Then join us for a discussion of
the film via Zoom on Thursday,
April 22 at 7:00 p.m.**

Synopsis: This is a 2015 documentary from Oscar® -winning director Louie Psihoyos (*The Cove*) that follows a team of artists and activists on an undercover operation to expose the hidden world of endangered species and the race to protect them against mass extinction. Spanning the globe to infiltrate the world's most dangerous black markets and using high tech tactics to document the link between carbon emissions and species extinction, *Racing Extinction* reveals stunning, never-before seen images that truly change the way we see the world.

To view the film – email nwilaudubon@gmail.com to receive the link and password. You can then watch on your own time between the dates above.

When you receive the link to the film, you will also receive the Zoom link to join the optional film discussion.

If you have any questions, contact Juliet at nwilaudubon@gmail.com

ENJOY THE SPRING MIGRATION!

From the first Red-winged Blackbird in February (well, maybe March this year), to the last Bobolink in May, the spring migration is a phenomenon of wonder. Truly, as many have said, this never gets old! Perhaps this spring migration will be the most anticipated and welcomed ever due to both the harsh February and our isolation from the pandemic. While last year's walks had to be canceled because of the safer-at-home order, this year we eagerly await our weekly walks in April and May at a variety of local sites.

All of the walks will begin at 8 a.m. and conclude at 11 a.m. Feel free to join or depart the group anytime during those three hours. If the weather is questionable or you need further directions to the site, please call the respective leader.

COVID Precautions: There will be no car-pooling, sharing of equipment, or group lunch out following the walks. Please bring your mask for times when physical distancing is not possible.

April 7 – Wetland areas of Eastern Stephenson County. Meet at Nieman's Pond just east of Freeport. Take Hwy. 20 east out of Freeport and turn left (north) on Springfield Rd. and drive about a mile to the pond. Leader: Mary Blackmore (815-938-3204).

April 13 – Duck's Misery and the southern Jane Addams Trail. Take Hwy. 26 north out of Freeport. Shortly after the Willow Lake subdivision, turn left (west) on Winneshiek Rd. Drive about 2 ½ miles (the road will curve at times, but bear west). Just past the intersection with the Jane Addams we will park along the road. Leader: Laura Dufford (815-947-2720).

April 22 – Happy Earth Day! Northern Jane Addams Trail and the Orangeville wetlands. Meet at the trailhead in Orangeville, just east of the BP gas station off of Hwy. 26. Leader: Somer Elgin (815-275-0719).

April 28 – Newell Tract, Oakdale Nature Preserve, Freeport. Meet in the parking area of the Newell Tract (the part of



Wilson's Warbler | Photo by Dan Barron

Oakdale on the west side of Crane's Grove Rd.). Leader: Anne Straight (815-938-3263).

May 5 – Pecatonica River Forest Preserve (main entrance by the campground). A special bonus of this walk will be stunning wildflowers and perhaps singing frogs! Take Hwy. 20 east from Freeport and turn left (north) on Pecatonica Rd. Drive through the village of Pecatonica. After crossing the river continue north about 3 ½ miles until Brick School Rd. Turn right (east) and drive about 2 miles, then the road curves to the left (north). The entrance is about ¼ mile past the curve. Leader: Richard Benning (815-865-5279).

May 14 – Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve, 3 miles southwest of Forreton in the southeast corner of West Grove and Freeport Rds. The parking area is off of West Grove Rd. We also hope to observe blooming spring wildflowers. Be sure to wear a hat, long sleeves, long pants (light colored is best) and socks long enough to tuck your pant legs into (for tick avoidance). Leader: Mary Blackmore (815-938-3204).

May 20 – Krape Park, Freeport. Meet in the parking lot by the dam. Leader: Juliet Moderow (201-233-0946)

May 25 – Harry and Dorothy Espenscheid Forest Preserve, northeast of Freeport. Take Hwy. 75 east out of Freeport. From the junction of Hwy. 20 bypass and Hwy. 75, continue about 5 miles to Cedarville Rd. Turn right (east) on Cedarville Rd. and drive 4.2 miles to Eggert Rd. Turn left (north) on Eggert Rd. and go 1.8 miles to Farm School Rd. Turn right (east) and go .3 miles to the preserve parking area, on the north side of the road. Leader: Richard Benning (815-865-5279).



BE PART OF CITIZEN SCIENCE

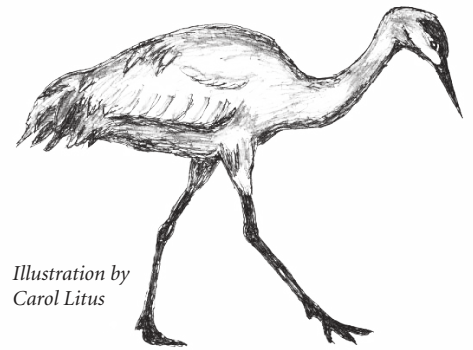


Illustration by
Carol Litus

CALLING ALL CRANE COUNTERS

Mark your calendar now for Saturday, April 17 when we'll once again be counting Sandhill Cranes in Stephenson County. Our count is part of the larger Midwest Crane Count organized by the International Crane Foundation. No experience with crane counting is necessary! If you are new to the Crane Count you will have a veteran counting partner to help you learn more about cranes. Inexperienced counters can also learn more about cranes on the International Crane Count website <https://www.savingcranes.org/>.

Due to the COVID 19 mitigations we will not be able to carpool or share spotting scopes. Participants will be asked to wear a face mask and stay at least six feet from other participants outside of their COVID unit. After the count we normally gather for breakfast but this will need to wait until 2022!

In 2020 the Crane Count was cancelled because of the pandemic but in 2019 we had 20 counters at 13 sites observed a total of 75 cranes. Volunteers make this count happen so we hope you can join us!

To participate call Teresa Smith at 815-238-3963 before April 2nd. The count is early, brief and rewarding. Counters are on site from 5:30-7:30 a.m. on count day to listen and watch for cranes. •

Questions About Your Membership?

Contact Teresa Smith at 815-238-3963
or timtreetsmith@gmail.com

Birdathon

Your money goes where the birds go



This year our chapter marks its 42nd year of sponsoring a BIRDATHON fundraising event! In that time thousands of dollars have been raised for bird conservation. Please join us in making this year's effort our best yet!

We invite you to make a pledge to any of the birders listed below who will be participating in our chapter's annual BIRDATHON on May 2. Your pledge, for instance 15¢, will be per SPECIES of bird that your selected birder(s) identifies on that day. Your birder will contact you after the count with his or her species total and collect your contribution.

Your money indeed goes where the birds go! All BIRDATHON proceeds are shared by organizations that do a tremendous job of:

- protecting and improving bird habitat
- on wintering grounds, migration corridors and nesting sites, connecting people with nature,
- providing education opportunities for the public, and
- collecting scientific data through bird counts and birdbanding.

Those organizations are:

Northwest Illinois Audubon Society
National Audubon's Mississippi River Initiative
Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin | Belize Audubon Society
Stewards of the Upper Mississippi | Sand Bluff Bird Observatory

Please complete the pledge form below and mail as indicated.
THANK YOU so much for your support
of birds and our BIRDATHON!

2021 BIRDATHON PLEDGE FORM

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

I am pledging _____¢ per species
by that (those) birder (s) marked below:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jesse Akins | <input type="checkbox"/> Gary Gordon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Richard Benning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mark Keister |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mary Blackmore | <input type="checkbox"/> Dylan Lewis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harlan and Judy Corrie | <input type="checkbox"/> Kent Lewis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jeremy Dixon | <input type="checkbox"/> Katelyn McWethy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mason Dixon | <input type="checkbox"/> Juliet and Willow Moderow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teresa Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> Bernard Lischwe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anne Straight | <input type="checkbox"/> Kara and Bob Gallup |

Clip and mail to Mary Blackmore, 9024 W. West Grove Rd., Forreton IL 61030 or include your pledge form with your chapter ballot mailed to NIAS, PO Box 771, Freeport, IL 61032.

Questions? Call Mary at 815-938-3204

2021 LOCAL FOODS BROCHURE AVAILABLE

Each year the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society in partnership with the University of Illinois Extension Stephenson County produces a Local Foods Brochure. It is a resource to connect local food buyers with local food growers.

The 2021 brochure lists over 40 growers in Northwest Illinois that offer local produce, maple syrup, cheese, honey, eggs, poultry and meat. Buying food locally has many advantages; limiting the amount of fuel used to transport food across the country, an opportunity to get to know the farmer that produced the food that you consume, and keeping dollars locally to promote a healthy community.

If you are interested in a free copy of the 2021 Local Foods Brochure you can pick one up at the University of Illinois Extension Stephenson/Winnebago/Jo Daviess County or at the Stephenson County Visitors Center in Freeport.

The brochure is also available at:
www.nwilaudbon.org or by calling 815-238-3963

– Teresa Smith

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Freeport, IL 61032

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2021 – 2022 BALLOT FOR NIAS CHAPTER OFFICERS

The individuals listed below have been nominated to serve on next year's NIAS Chapter Board of Directors in the positions indicated. Please vote in the spaces provided if you support the nominated candidates, or insert and vote for write-in candidates if that is your wish. All Board terms, except for President, are for one year. Gary Gordon will serve his second year as President of the Board in 2021-2022

Elected Officers

VICE PRESIDENT

- Pam Richards
 Write-in

SECRETARY

- Fran Shriver
 Write-in

TREASURER

- Tim Smith
 Write-in

MEMBERS AT LARGE (vote for six)

- Elizabeth Boettner
 Jeremy Dixon
 Carol Redmore
 Fred Redmore
 Jeff Shriver
 Steve Simpson
 Write-in
 Write-in
 Write-in

Send your ballot to NIAS, PO Box 771, Freeport, IL 61032 before April 15. Results will be announced in the next newsletter and the new Board will assume its duties in mid-May.

Standing Committee Chairs (appointed)

Conservation | Teresa Smith
Programs | Don Miller
Education | Adam Moderow
Publicity | Leah Dixon
Membership | Molly Doolittle
Field Trips | Mary Blackmore

BRUSH PILES CAN EVEN THE PLAYING FIELD

Much of this winter was tough on birds. Multiple layers of ice and snow made it very difficult for seed eaters to get down to the ground where the food was. Bird feeder use went way up, not just with songbirds, but with the raptors who feed on those songbirds. This predator-prey relationship has long fascinated me. I have equal admiration for the avoidance strategies of the prey and the patience and cryptic coloring of the predator.

While many people place feeders near perching cover, sheltering cover is sometimes overlooked. With the human intervention of providing much more food at one site than is typically found in nature comes the responsibility to also provide cover so prey species have opportunity to shelter from predators. If you don't have dense deciduous or coniferous shrubs near your feeders, brush piles can be an effective form of cover. Create your own from picking up branches in your yard, pruning trees or shrubs, or removing invasive shrubs.

If you stock your feeders seasonally, your bird feeding window is coming to an end. Remember those brush piles for next fall. If you feed all year, be sure to establish brush piles near your feeders as soon as the weather permits. Both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, the most common songbird predators in our area, are year-around residents.

While this predator-prey relationship has been going on for eons, when we tip the balance one way, we are obligated to then even it out as best we can.

– Mary Blackmore

OPTIONAL:

If submitting a 2021 Birdathon Pledge *and* 2021-2022 NIAS Chapter Officer Ballot

you can fold both pieces and mail together to **save paper, postage and the need for an envelope.**

1. Remove: this **entire sheet** from the newsletter (cut along spine)
2. Fold: in **quarters**
3. Fasten: **tape/tab** left, right, bottom (open) edges
4. Apply: **postage** and mail

ALICE AKINS – ONE OF A KIND

On January 4 our chapter lost a dear friend and one of its most ardent supporters when Alice Akins passed away. She was one of the kindest, most generous people I've known and, lucky for us, Audubon had a special place in her heart.

It began with the purchase of our Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve. Alice and her husband Jim hosted several fundraiser ice cream socials at their farm which was close to the preserve, and Alice contributed many delicious baked goods to silent auctions specifically for the preserve debt. She also volunteered to provide cookies for the preserve's annual Butterfly Festival. In recent years she would bring special treats to at least one campfire at Elkhorn Creek each year and she opened her house to volunteers for a deluxe breakfast following the annual work session on the section named for her husband, Jim's Hill. I think you can sense a theme here – really good food! Alice knew that really good food was more than nourishment; it was caring and love. And boy, did we feel loved after those breakfasts – what a spread!

Alice never wanted to take credit for her efforts. When volunteers would begin to heap praise upon her for such a delicious repast, she would say, "Oh no, no. You people are the ones that deserve thanks for all of the work that you do."

Her contributions were not limited to Elkhorn Creek. She always baked pies for our annual banquet dessert table and donated many baked goods for our banquet's silent auction fundraiser. Alice contributed generously to our annual Birdathon and our Land Acquisition and Management Fund. She took part in the Midwest Crane Count each year with her son Jesse, often joined by grandchildren. For the last three years she volunteered her garage as the Forreton pickup site for our birdseed sale. I helped customers load their seed, but mostly I played Scrabble with Alice. At morning's end she would insist on taking me out to lunch, even though she had provided the site as well as a fun game, cups of tea and yummy cookies. That's just how she saw it.

One of my favorite memories of Alice was the first time she brought treats to a campfire. The sun was setting and the fire was blazing, as those in attendance were telling stories or pointing out an evening bird or amphibian call. Headlights indicated a late-arriving participant in the parking lot, but the car didn't stop there. Instead it headed down the path toward us. "Who is that?" someone uttered, "Don't they know cars aren't allowed on the trail?" When the car got close enough, I recognized it as Alice's and smiled. "It's OK," I said. When Alice got out of the car and was then recognized by everyone, we all cheered and welcomed her warmly. From that day forward Alice, and only Alice, received special dispensation for driving on the campfire trail. She was and still is, in our hearts, one of a kind.

– Mary Blackmore

CLEAN ENERGY JOBS ACT UPDATE

Lawmakers have reintroduced the Clean Energy Jobs Act in the 102nd General Assembly.

The Clean Energy Jobs Act, or CEJA, which was introduced in 2019, is an overhaul of the state's energy industry crafted with a focus on carbon reduction as well as social and environmental justice.

The 900-page bill would increase development of renewable energy sources, such as wind turbines and solar power, by committing Illinois to 100 percent renewable energy by 2050, cutting carbon from the power sector by 2030, reducing pollution from gas and diesel vehicles in the transportation sector, and creating jobs and economic opportunity across the state.

The original version of CEJA included provisions to protect consumers and prevent utility corruption, but the bill now contains stronger language in response to the deferred prosecution agreement in which ComEd admitted to a years-long bribery scheme aimed at influencing the

state's former House speaker, Michael Madigan.

Currently, along with paying utility rates, consumers spend over \$1.8 billion a year on capacity payments to acquire coal-fired power. Capacity is a sort of insurance policy through which companies are paid to guarantee they are able to produce enough energy to handle peak usage times for a number of years into the future.

If CEJA is passed, the bill would enable the Illinois Power Agency to procure capacity, removing Illinois from a federally regulated multi-state capacity auction. The IPA could then emphasize the purchase of renewables, rather than fossil fuels, in its capacity auctions.

CEJA also aims to end automatic rate hikes for utility delivery services, replacing them with a performance-based rate setting, meaning the ICC could only approve utility investments, programs and rates that are cost-effective and contribute to the greater goal of a renewable energy electric grid.

According to the Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition, lower electric rates for consumers are written into the legislation. The renewable energy development portion of the bill is paid for primarily by redirecting excess profits that are currently being paid to out-of-state fossil fuel companies.

While Governor Pritzker has expressed commitment to clean energy in Illinois, the COVID pandemic has relegated this and many other items to the back burner. However, the feeling now is that Illinois urgently needs to pass CEJA during this legislative session. If passed into law, CEJA would benefit Illinois economically and move the state to the forefront in addressing climate change.

What you can do: Please call or email Governor Pritzker and your State representatives and senators and tell them to pass CEJA now and continue to do this weekly.

– Candy Colby

OUR DIMINISHING ECOSYSTEM: YOU CAN BE PART OF THE SOLUTION!

The perfect follow-up to Dan and Sarah Barron's last Audubon newsletter (explaining everything about native plantings) is to inform you that you can help by documenting even small SQUARE FOOTAGES of your own native plantings. Doug Tallamy, a University of Delaware entomologist (insects) professor and author/speaker has proposed a nationwide effort to document individual private yards planted in natives in an effort to save our ecosystem. To participate you can go to homegrownnationalpark.org to add your square feet of natives. There is no cost and they do not contact you.



Front yard prairie planting
Photo by Pam Richards

Over decades of research, Doug has observed that it is not enough to have public land such as railroad or utility right-of-ways, airports, golf courses, etc. with pollinator plantings as that accounts for only 15% of all land east of the Mississippi River. The remaining 85% is private ownership. His objective is to save at least 20 million acres in the U.S. reserved for native pollinating yards. Even if you do not have birdfeeders; your yard can be a feeder for insects, birds, amphibians, reptiles, mammals on up the food chain. **Homegrownnationalpark.org** is the online instrument to record any amount of native plantings on your own properties.

Doug and his students have studied Carolina chickadees for years discovering that 6,240-9,120 caterpillars are required just to raise ONE clutch (not including the parent birds who continue to feed those fledglings another 24 days). Birds don't eat seeds while reproducing or feeding their young, they need insects. The caterpillars (as do other insects)

require their SPECIALIZED PLANTS (i.e. native) to lay eggs, feed, pollinate, etc. to maintain the ecosystem.

Since 1970 3 billion birds have been lost while 1 million more species face extinction in the next decade (Science, September 2019). Tallamy starkly states: "we are starving wildlife when we do not have enough natives." He says "keep your and grandma's favorites; but ADD native species." With the picky diets of plant-eating insects; most of these bugs (roughly 90%) eat and reproduce on only certain native plant species- specifically THOSE WITH WHOM THEY SHARE AN EVOLUTIONARY HISTORY. Native insects cannot recognize foreign plant species as food, which disrupts the food chain leading to ecosystem collapse (bringingnaturehome.net). Doug points out that plants do not want to be eaten and have distasteful chemicals, fuzzy leaves, fragrances, thorns, etc. These non-native ornamentals reduce insect biomass by 96%. Add onto that our sprawling buildings, homes, highways, etc and no wonder our planet has lost 2/3 of its wildlife since 1970 (World Wildlife Fund, 2018). But the native wildlife have been brought up with native plants and they have a symbiotic relationship.

If you want to know the keystone native plants for your zip code go to nwf.org/nativeplantfinder. Yes it is difficult to find these authentic (not cultivars) species. Here are some resources: prairiemoon.com, prairienursery.com, or look for any Wild Ones or other groups' spring native plant sales. Don't forget to register any amount of plantings at homegrownnationalpark.org. "Land ownership is more than a privilege; it's a responsibility" (one of Doug's quotes).

– Pam Richards



World Migratory Bird Day Events – Starting a new tradition in our community

The 2021 World Migratory Bird Day theme is "Sing, Fly, Soar – Like a Bird!"

World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) is an awareness-raising campaign highlighting the need for the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats. It aims to draw attention to the threats faced by migratory birds, their ecological importance, and the need for international cooperation to conserve them. (from migratorybirdday.org)

This year, we want to encourage our Northwest Illinois community to celebrate WMBD in a bigger way by partnering with many other groups in our area. WMBD was officially celebrated on the second Saturday of May in Canada and the US; However, every day is Migratory Bird Day, and it is encouraged that we celebrate birds and host events any day of the year (as we already do!).

While these celebrations are still developing at the time of printing this newsletter, we can tell you the following are currently scheduled throughout Freeport:

- Freeport Art Museum is hosting two exhibits: *Alice Hargrave - The Suffragette* Conference of the Birds after Farid Attar and *For The Birds – Running from April 17 to August 7th*
- Winneshiek Playhouse – *Monday Monologues (April 19 – August 7th) with recorded readings from The Birds by Aristophanes*
- Visit the Children's Hands-on Museum during their regular hours and visit the restored Oakdale Diorama Exhibit to learn about the changing seasons and search for the various species of birds.
- Draw a Bird Day on April 8 with the Freeport Art Museum
- Bird-themed storytimes with the Freeport Public Library on April 21 and April 24 at 10:30 am.
- Bird displays and a Bird Scavenger Hunt at the Freeport Public Library throughout the month of April and early May

NATIVE SHRUBS FOR LANDSCAPING



Photo by Dan Barron

Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) is a favorite of native pollinators.

In the last newsletter, Dan and Sarah Barron gave us the very compelling reasons we should move our landscaping projects toward planting natives. These reasons being: Biodiversity (helpful to native insects and birds), Inputs (using less fertilizers, herbicides, and water), and Resiliency (natives are acclimated to our Midwest climate extremes).

Spring is when we spend time out in our yards cleaning up, planting new or replacing old and dying plants. The following is a list of some native shrub species that are suggested for landscaping. These species are known for their wildlife values, both for insects (pollinators and butterfly/moth larvae) and for bird nesting and food sources.

Serviceberry/Juneberry/Shadbush

Amelanchier arborea and *A. laevis*
Medium to dry soil, sun to part shade

New Jersey Tea – *Ceanothus americanus*

Medium to dry soil, full sun to part shade

American Plum – *Prunus americana*

Medium to dry soil, full sun

Dogwoods:

Rough leaved – *Cornus drummondii*

Red Osier – *Cornus sericea*
(not red twigged!)

Gray – *Cornus racemosa*

These all have different growing requirements

Hazelnut/Filbert – *Corylus americana*

Medium to dry soil, full sun to part shade

Shrubby St. John's wort

Hypericum prolificum

Moist to medium soil, full sun to part shade

Spicebush – *Lindera benzoin*

Moist to medium, dappled sun to medium shade

Elderberry – *Sambucus nigra*

Moist to medium, full sun to part shade
(makes thickets)

Chokeberry – *Photinia melancarpa*

Moist to medium/dry, light shade to full sun

Blackhaw viburnum

Viburnum prunifolium

Medium to dry, full sun best to part shade

Nannyberry – *Viburnum lentago*

Moist to medium, full sun to part shade

Chokecherry – *Prunus virginiana*

Wide range soils, sun to light shade

Common Witch Hazel

Hamamelis virginiana

Dry to medium soils, part shade to shade

Buttonbush – *Cephalanthus occidentalis*

Wet (best) to medium soils, full sun

Ninebark – *Physocarpus opulifolius*

Moist to dry/medium soils, full sun to part shade

*More information is available regarding growing habits and bloom times

NOTE: Try to stay away from cultivars of native species. Some cultivars do not offer the same pollinator/food benefits of natives.

A few species to **NOT** plant include the following:

Bush/Japanese honeysuckle

Burning bush

Barberry

You may consider replacing these species on your property as they have escaped and are now considered invasive in natural areas.

Check out this website for other invasive species: <https://www.invasive.org/illinois/speciesofconcern.html>

– Laura Dufford

World Migratory Bird Day Events continued...

- Freeport Area Camera Club displayed in area businesses
- Repeat program by Juliet Moderow, presenting *Understanding the "Survival by Degrees Report"* on Thursday, April 29 at 7pm via Zoom/Freeport Public Library
- "Sing, Fly, Soar – Like a Bird!" on Saturday, May 8 at 11:00 a.m. at Taylor Park in Freeport. The Freeport Art Museum will be providing cardboard wings and paper beaks (that attach outside of your COVID masks) for kids and families to take and paint in advance prior to May 8. If you were unable to get wings in advance, you can also come to Taylor Park earlier at 10:00

am to paint and decorate wings. Then join us at 11:00 a.m. at Taylor Park for a social-distanced "migration" around the park and other safe activities.

- In addition, you can also "migrate" through the streets of Freeport with your wings and beaks anytime this day as local businesses will be celebrating Migratory Bird Day!

Many of the events are either virtual or in-person and dependent on COVID-restrictions at the time. To learn more about the events, please contact the specific locations hosting the events and visit our website and our NWIL Audubon Facebook page as well.

Skunk Cabbage is usually the first plant to bloom in the spring, as early as February but more often March. It generates its own heat, melting the snow around it, and gives off a foul stench to attract flies for pollination.



Blooming Skunk Cabbage (*Symlocarpus foetidus*)
Photo by Teresa Smith

WASTE NOT, WANT NOT..

Waste not, want not is an old proverb that certainly can be applied to food waste in this country. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that more food waste reaches landfills than any other trash item and is a serious contributor to climate change. Landfills account for approximately 20% of the total methane emissions in the US and methane is a 28% more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

None of us want to waste food but it happens –the forgotten apple or orange in the back of the refrigerator and the potato peels and other vegetable trimmings that usually get tossed in the garbage. One small way we can help reduce food waste in our own homes is by composting. It is doable in both urban and rural environments and it is way easier than you think!

First, set up your space, a 3 x 3-foot fenced area is ideal but you can compost directly on the ground too. There are various bins available to purchase if you want a tidier area for your compost. You can even

punch some holes in the bottom of a large garbage can and compost in that, it may just take a bit longer to decompose, even a 5-gallon bucket will do as a start.

Second, what can you compost? Leaves, coffee grounds and filters, sawdust, old hay and straw, fruit peels, eggshells, veggie trimmings, shredded newspaper (no glossy paper), cardboard, grass clippings, manures (cow, horse, sheep, poultry, rabbit, llama), yard trimmings, hair and fur, bread, grains. You can already see how this will reduce what goes to the landfill. **DO NOT compost meat, bones, dairy or cat, dog, swine, and carnivore manures, or yard trimmings treated with chemical pesticides.**

Lastly, compost maintenance. If you want to speed up the composting process, your compost should be kept moist and turned on a weekly basis during the summer and monthly during the winter. It is a good idea to add just a bit of soil from the garden to each new layer of material to introduce beneficial organisms. However, if you just

let your pile sit with minimal attention, it will end up with usable compost too, it will just take longer and may be a bit more fragrant.

Once you have your first batch of compost, use it in your vegetable garden, sprinkle it around your plants or as a top dressing for your lawn. Your houseplants would love a little bit of it as well. You will be hooked the first time you harvest that luscious, dark, rich soil produced by your food waste and you will see the benefits in your gardens and will feel happy that you are helping our planet just a little bit.

There is a treasure trove of information available on composting, to start with check out the U of I Extension information at: web.extension.illinois.edu/compost/

– Kay Day

*Environmental Study Group
Facebook: @esgroup32*

EARTH DAY 2021

Celebrate Earth Day on April 22nd, the official Earth Day, or celebrate all week or month! Earth Day is a great reminder that we need to continue to protect our planet earth and all that she offers. We all want clean air, clean water, and our wild plants and creatures to have a place to call home. This year it's not possible to celebrate in large groups, but we can all celebrate as individuals, families, or small groups that are safely following Covid19 health guidelines. Here's a small list of things YOU can do to be a part of Earth Day/week/month:

- Take a walk around your neighborhood/road and look for blooming flowers, count the number of bird species you see, or just revel in the changing of winter to spring.
- Pick up trash around your neighborhood, road, or places you see trash laying around

- Plant a few native species in your yard or property. Use the list of native shrubs in this newsletter or check out the many websites that list native plants in our part of Illinois.
- Contact your local, state and federal elected officials. Remind them that protecting our planet should be a high priority. Mention renewable energy, endangered species, promoting local and small farmers, or any other issues that are important to you. Be sure to thank them if they've supported good legislation in the past.
- Get down on your hands and knees and look CLOSELY at a square meter of your yard, garden or natural area. See how many small living creatures are running around, look for fungus and moss, what else do you see?
- Eat a locally sourced meal from some of the producers in the area. Check out our list of Local Producers at: <https://www.nwilaudubon.org/news/2020%20local%20produce%20brochure.pdf> Vow to eat as locally as you can for the rest of the year.
- ***Be creative! What else can you do??***

**MARK YOUR
CALENDARS!!**

**EARTH FEST
2021!!**

***We're sponsoring an Earth
Fest on Saturday, June 5
10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.***

This will be held in the Freeport Arts Plaza, Debate Square and Freeport Public Library. There will be exhibits and activities for children and adults including yoga or walking meditation. We will be hosting two programs featuring live birds and critters with Hoo Haven and Northern IL Raptor Rehab & Education. Check out the next newsletter for more details.

TIPS FOR A PLASTIC-FREE LIFESTYLE

We are all looking for ways we can reduce our plastic use and here are some suggestions on ways to start changing our relationship with plastic.

Replace these plastic items.....	With these
Straws	Reusable stainless steel or glass straws
Styrofoam/Plastic Coffee cups	Reusable stainless steel or glass containers
K-cups	Ground coffee, reusable mug
Plastic water bottles	Reusable stainless steel or glass water bottles
Plastic storage bags	Glass or other reusable containers with lids
Food Storage containers	Glass storage – save old food jars, canning jars, etc.
Plastic wrap	Bees wax wraps
Toothbrushes	Bamboo or other non-plastic alternative
Toothpaste	Tooth cleaning powders, toothpaste tablets
Plastic Floss containers	Compostable floss and refillable floss containers
Laundry soap containers	Eco-sheets, tablets
Liquid Dish soap	Dish soap bar, powder, dishwasher powder
Cleaning supplies	Powders, tablets, homemade cleaners
Liquid hand soap	Solid bar soap
Liquid Shampoo/conditioner	Solid Bars or liquid in reusable steel containers

SOME SUGGESTED BRANDS FROM MEMBERS & FRIENDS

NIAS is not endorsing these and there are more out there!

- Laundry: Eco-laundry sheets – **Earth Breeze and Tru Earth; Soapnuts** (plant-based alternative)
- Shampoo bars – **Lush, The Earthling company**
- **Plaine Products** – products come in steel, returnable containers: shampoo, conditioner, body wash & hand lotion
- **Blueland** – Eco-friendly cleaning & laundry supplies, come in tablet forms
- **Package Free Shop** – 100% sustainable products and ships without plastic
- *Request these products from your local stores and markets. Increase the demand for these items so they can be supplied locally to you.*
- *Do you have other suggestions? Items to recommend? We can put them in our next newsletter.*

**Please email them to:
nwilaudubon@gmail.com**

SPRING STEWARDSHIP

We invite you to join us on one or more of our Spring Stewardship days as we work together to reduce the numbers of Wild Parsnip, Garlic Mustard and honeysuckle on both of our preserves and the Freeport Prairie Nature Preserve. Early removal means not only cooler temperatures for us, but less biomass. We just slice and fling with our trusty parsnip predator tools and don't have to carry out seedheads.

Considering both the unpredictability of plant emergence times and the increasing wild fluctuations in spring weather, we're going to use our contact list to notify volunteers of each work session in April and May. We'll do our best to provide as much advanced notice as we can. When

contacted, if you're available, please join us. To get on the contact list email Nancy at rnocken@gmail.com or call Mary at 815-938-3204.

Each session will be 2 hours long and usually occur in the morning, though some afternoons may be scheduled if the temperatures are cool. Be sure to wear a hat, long sleeves, long pants (light colored is best) and socks long enough to tuck your pant legs into (for tick avoidance). If weather is questionable contact Mary or Nancy as above.

Due to the ongoing pandemic only tools will be provided. Volunteers need to bring their own gloves, water and

snack (if desired). Also be sure to bring your mask for times when you aren't physically distanced from your fellow volunteers. Thank you !

Our Elkhorn Creek preserve is located about 3 miles southwest of Forreston in the southeast corner of West Grove and Freeport Rds. The parking lot is off of West Grove Rd. Our Silver Creek preserve is located about 2 miles south of Leaf River (S. Main St. in Leaf River becomes Leaf River Rd.), with parking just off of Leaf River Rd. The Freeport Prairie is located off of Walnut Rd. on Freeport's south side. •

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF NORTHWEST ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY

The Northwest Illinois Audubon Society, originally named Stephenson County Audubon Society, was formed on June 10, 1971 and chartered in 1972 as a Chapter of the National Audubon Society.

We wanted to celebrate our amazing 50 years as a chapter by showcasing past accomplishments, stories, and photos from the beginning in the upcoming newsletters for this year and honoring the many people that were significant in the establishment of this chapter. Many of the stories you will see will come from a treasured scrapbook containing newspaper articles from 1971-1981 and from current Audubon members.

After a successful first year as a chapter, the Stephenson County Audubon Society continued on their mission with quality programs, field trips, and campaigns.

In 1972, many programs educated people about birds, the environment, and environmental issues. There were presentations about the river ecology of the Rock and Wisconsin Rivers, presented by Beloit College students Marilyn Browning and Darleen Masiak, wildlife and nature photography by Mrs. Robert Maxson, a slide show of native wildflowers by Mr. Carl H. Davis, a program on the efforts to preserve and restore native prairie in northwestern Illinois by Tim

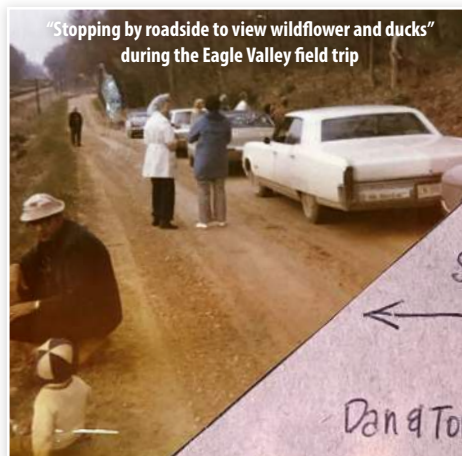


Tom and Dan Kubitz during a field trip to Eagle Valley, Wisconsin in 1972.



Terry Ingram led a field trip to view the bluffs of Cassville, Wisconsin and Eagle Valley, Wisconsin

Keller, a program on birds and bird calls by Mr. Roger Allen, a program on air pollution by Mr. Richard Goff of the EPA, and a program by Mr. Keith Blackmore of Highland Community College about how people are interested in protecting the environment, but not doing enough for



it. Blackmore stated: "One of the hot issues in Freeport is flood control. Damming of the Pecatonica River would only shift the problem to someone else. The only thing to do is to take people off the flood plain."

Field trips included visiting Eagle Roosting Areas (Cassville, Wisconsin) led by Terry Ingram, who is currently a member of the Eagle Nature Foundation, a tour of Lake of the Woods Nursery, a "Geological Park Tour" of Krape Park led by John Kalney, and a trip to Horicon Marsh. •



"Field trip to Horicon Marsh in 2016"

"We should sit down and examine the data and stop kidding ourselves. It may mean a change in our style of living. There must be a massive change in thinking, and then we can strike out on new paths. There will only be change when there are intellectual exchanges and the public is no longer apathetic."

– Keith Blackmore, Feb, 1972

COMMENTS FROM OUR MEMBERS

It Began With a Field Trip

Although I had been a member for over a year, my relationship with our Audubon chapter didn't begin until a field trip description caught my eye, and it wasn't focused on birds. At the time I was a bird liker; becoming a bird lover was still half a decade away. That outing in the fall of 1975 was to Koenig's Apiary just southwest of Krape Park. I remember how interesting and fun the trip was and especially how friendly the people were, considering that I was a complete stranger to them. That pretty much describes every one of the hundreds of field trips that I've participated in since then, except that many of my fellow participants have become my friends.



Admiring the spring wildflowers at Mississippi Palisades State Park
Photo by Keith Blackmore

I've always appreciated the diversity of interests within our chapter members, which in turn has led to a diversity of field trips over the decades. Of course, we've had lots of birding trips, from treasured local sites to more distant locales such as Hawk Ridge in Minnesota and Magee Marsh in Ohio. However, we've had just as many, if not more, non-birding trips which focused on insects, prairies, woodland wildflowers, museums, geology, sustainable agriculture, and nature recreation like cross-country skiing, biking, canoeing, including a trip to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

Some of the most special trips were the multiple outings we took to the Platte River in Nebraska to witness the March staging of hundreds of thousands of Sandhill Cranes, an absolutely awesome

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 _____

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Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

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Name _____

Make check payable to **NORTHWEST ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY** and mail to:
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"It Began With a Field Trip" continued...



Sandhill Cranes at sunset over the Platte River
Photo by Keith Blackmore

experience. The first two of those trips really stand out because one of the participants was my mother. I was really surprised when she registered for those trips, considering her well known aversion to being outdoors. Turns out she loved Sandhill Cranes. Who knew? Those trips created many wonderful memories that my mom and I talked about for the rest of her life.

– Mary Blackmore

THANK YOU!

Thank you to the following individuals for their recent donations to Northwest Illinois Audubon:

*Karla Toelke, Deb Cheek, Terri Clark,
Bob Remer, Mike and Deb Eickman,
Barry Treu and Mary Brandt.*

Also thank you to Gary and Jane Koeller for their recent donation in memory of Alice Akins.

Recent field trip leaders: Richard Benning, Mary Blackmore and Anne Straight.

Teresa Smith and Mary Blackmore for updating our Local Foods brochure.

Shey Lowman for updating the species lists for our preserves.

Pam Richards for her years of monitoring our nest boxes at Elkhorn Creek and Kara Gallup for agreeing to be a new nest box monitor.

Debbie and Jack Barron at Freeport Press for being able to print our newsletter in light of their shop's roof collapse this winter. We are so grateful for everything they have done for Audubon!



Welcome New Members!

Jerry Misk – Elizabeth
Wayne Shellhause – Freeport
Laura Jepson – Freeport
Jack Breit – German Valley
Laura Taplin – Hanover
John Gvozdzak – Sterling

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**Northwest Illinois
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