



# Southern Illinois Audubon Society

March 2013 – Vol. 20, No. 3

P.O. Box 222  
Carbondale, IL 62903-0222

## NEWSLETTER

Established in 1970

### Response of Wild Turkeys to Grassland Fire Management in an Agricultural Setting

is the title of a research project being conducted by Ryan Tebo, Masters student in the Cooperative Wildlife Research Lab at SIU-Carbondale. Ryan will describe his project in a program for SIAS on Friday, March 22th at 7 p.m., to be held at Carbondale Township Hall, 217 E. Main St., Carbondale. (Use the back entrance, north off East Monroe Street, where parking is available.)

The focus of Ryan's work is assessing the impact prescribed fire has in grassland areas to see if fire can create favorable habitat for nest sites, as well as quality forage for newly hatched turkeys.

Ryan is originally from Oshkosh, WI, where he got his Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Ecology: Research and Management at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. More information about Ryan's research at SIU can be found at: <http://wildlife.siu.edu/Grad%20Students/TeboRyan.html>

J.J. Audubon print



Welcome new member - Jill Adams of Makanda.

#### 2013 Meetings Calendar:

**April 26th:** Program to be announced

**May:** SIAS Annual Picnic

**August 23rd:** Denny Hays - *Africa Safari*

**September 37th:** Karen Mangan - *Bats*

**October 25th:** John Schwegman - *Wildlife of the Ecuador Andes and Amazon Lowlands with special emphasis on birds*

### Happy 95th Birthday Stan Harris!

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#### February Program Highlights: Nunavut Revealed

Dr. George Waring, emeritus professor of zoology at SIUC, presented a program based on his recent trip to Greenland and northeastern Canada at the February SIAS meeting.

The program covered not only the wildlife and plants of the region but also the native peoples. There have actually been three culturally identifiable groups of peoples from northern Asia who spread across the arctic new world. Those people who live there now are representatives of the most recent migration. Until recently the term used for these peoples was Eskimo, but they have now replaced that term with their preferred name from their own language, Inuit. The trip took the Waring to visit the easternmost of these people on the west coast of Greenland.

Greenland is actually a misnomer for the airport and voyage departure point for the ship. Kangerlussuaq, a small village is well back on a fjord, a sea flooded glacier cut valley. The small village and airport was located on mostly bare rock and rather close to receding glaciers. The ship Clipper Adventurer cruised for a few days down the 105 mile long Stromfjord to wait out a storm in the Davis Strait. One side trip was to one of the nearby glaciers with beautiful blue colored ice.

The next port of call was the Greenland capital of Nuuk, further south on the western coast. The 16,000 inhabitants live in brightly colored houses that resemble European cottages. These people are the descendants of the Thule Inuit third wave of culture from the west with a maritime heritage of toggle harpoons, kayaks and umiak boats, and bows and arrows. The national museum with lots of artifacts of native culture such as clothing, kayaks, ulu skin scrapers, qulliq oil lamps, and qilant drums was a highlight of the stop. There was also an opportunity to listen to the native choir at a Moravian church. Singing and chanting are a big part of the retained culture of the people.

The ship crossed the Davis Strait to Baffin Island and sailed south with views of several whales and dolphins including orcas and polar bears on the shore. This area is north of the tree line and vegetation is shrubs, many kinds of berry bushes, and Labrador tea.

One stop was at Ramah Bay, Labrador, a sealing camp of subterranean sod covered houses of the previous second wave far north culture. Chert points from this vicinity have been found as far away as Vermont. The coastal rock cairns called inukuk are found on the high points overlooking the sea of this coast. The cairn is featured on the Nunavut flag.

As the ship continued south trees such as larch, fir, spruce, willow birch and alder appeared on the Labrador coast signifying leaving the tundra.

At the northern tip of Newfoundland Island there was a stop at the L'anse Aux Meadows viking site. The earliest location where there is proof of European habitation in the Americas. The site, from about 1000 A.D. was a location where bog iron was processed to make metal tools. This site has been archeologically restored to how it looked when occupied.

Although the voyage continued this is where we ended for the evening with a spectacular view of the aurora borealis.

Great presentation from Dr. Waring. *-Joe Merkelbach, President*

### Help Protect Forest Elephants Before It's Too Late

A recently released study revealed that over 60% of forest elephants have been slaughtered by poachers in the past decade. Worse yet, if poaching continues at this rate, the species will be nearing extinction within the next decade. One of the big problems is that some religious groups highly prize religious figurines made out of ivory and the desire for these items is pushing the slaughter. There are laws in the books made to protect elephants from poachers and stop the ivory trade but the problem is the laws are not being enforced – and with global demand (and price) for ivory at an all-time high, criminals will exploit every tiny opening that they can find.

The National Geographic Society has compiled a report on the ongoing slaughter and produced a documentary film which can be accessed at <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2012/10/ivory/christy-text>

The WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society) team is delivering an elephant petition to the U.S. government during an important meeting of world leaders in conservation called CITES Conference of Parties. The petition urges the U.S. government to urge CITES to identify where the gaps in enforcement are happening and close them – so that elephants can survive. But WCS will only deliver it if they get 35,000 signatures – they need to make sure the petition holds weight with our delegates.

Visit this website link to sign a petition: <https://secure3.convio.net/wcs/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=539>

## ***What's Happening - Events & Outings***

### **March 23 – Birding for Beginners**

Join in this classroom introduction to basic birding skills at 6:30 p.m. at the Giant City State Park Visitor's Center, 235 Giant City Road. For more info, contact Ruth Kelley, Program Chair for Friends of Giant City at 618.684.2196.

### **April-May – Movie Nights at the Cache**

Movie Nights will be held the first Thursday of the month from 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. at the Cache River Wetlands Center, 8885 State Rt. 37 South, Cypress. On April 4<sup>th</sup> the movie will be "River Otter." On May 2<sup>nd</sup> the movie will be "Is That A skunk?" For more info, phone the Wetlands Center at 618.667.2064.

### **April-May – Monitoring of Owls and Nightjars Study**

The Illinois Natural History Survey coordinates a citizen scientist "Monitoring of Owls and Nightjars" (MOON) study. And help is needed. Read all about the survey at <http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/research/MOON/>

If you or anyone you know would be interesting in monitoring please have them contact Tara Beveroth, Avian Field Coordinator at the Illinois Natural History Survey at 217.265.7303 or [beveroth@illinois.edu](mailto:beveroth@illinois.edu)

### **April 6 – SIAS Outing to Sahara Woods**

Les Winkler, Outdoor Writer for the Southern Illinoisan, and SIAS Outings Chair Trevor Hinckley will co-lead an outing to Sahara Woods, west of Harrisburg. The roughly 4,200 acres that comprise Sahara Woods were given to the State of IL by Sahara Coal several years ago. It is an interesting mix of habitats with the potential for multiple bird species. If you plan on staying past noon bring a lunch.

Directions to Sahara Woods: From route 13 turn south onto Carrier Mills Road, then right (west) onto Town Park Road at Carrier Mills Park, and, finally, turn North (right) onto Tipple Road at the T intersection. The headquarters parking lot is just a few hundred feet up Tipple Road. There are signs for Sahara Woods in Carrier Mills and at the main entrance at the corner of Town Park and Tipple Roads. Google maps image of the meeting sight is [here](#).

### **April 18 – Geologic Secrets of the Springfield Coal Fossilized Forests**

Scott Elrick will present: "Snapshot in Time - Geologic Secrets of the Springfield Coal Fossilized Forests" at 7 p.m. in the Life Science III Auditorium, Lincoln Drive (across from the Communications Bldg.) on SIU-Carbondale Campus. This program is being co-sponsored by the IL Native Plant Society Southern Chapter, the SIUC Chapter of Sigma Xi, and the SIU Dept. of Plant Biology.

### **April 20 – Cache Spring Birding**

Spend a Saturday identifying birds on the diverse landscape that the Cache has to offer. 7-9 a.m. Call ahead and reserve your spot. Group size will be limited. Birders of all skill levels are welcome to participate. For more info call the Cypress Creek Wildlife Refuge at 618.634.2231

### **April 26-28 – IAS Spring Gathering at Emiquon**

Migrate to the Illinois River to discover nature from bluff to bluff. Tour various places in the valley and learn about the history of change in and around The Nature Conservancy's Emiquon Preserve. In partnership with Dickson Mounds Museum and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois Audubon Society (IAS) invites members and non-members to enjoy a great weekend hosted by the Emiquon Audubon Society.

Friday activities include a museum tour, a Voyageur canoe tour, an opening reception, and a program "This Place Called Emiquon" presented by The Nature Conservancy. On Saturday, participants will have five field trips to choose from; on Sunday three field trips are being offered.

Online registration available, registration deadline is April 15<sup>th</sup>. <https://www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowRegistrantInfo?ID=2046&EID=14504>

Lodging: a block of rooms has been reserved at the Canton Harvester Inn for a rate of \$89/night. Breakfast is included and will be served at 5:30 a.m. Room reservations must be made by April 2 to receive this special rate. To make a lodging reservation call the hotel directly at 855.422.6866, mention ID#0413IAS.

### **April 27 & 28 – Birding Blitz of Southernmost IL**

Form a team and compete in the Birding Blitz! Spend the spring day of April 27<sup>th</sup> birding in the midst of songbird migration with some of your friends while supporting habitat restoration and preservation in the Cache River Watershed.

Choose a category that best suits you and your friends from a list of five: Open A / Big Day - for those "hardcore" birders; Open B / Dawn to Dusk - for those who prefer a more relaxed day of birding; County Big Day - spend the whole day birding in your favorite southernmost IL county; Muscle-powered - for those who prefer a day of non-motorized birding; and last but not least the Senior category – for the young at heart.

An awards brunch will be held at the Crab Orchard NWR Visitors' Center the morning of April 28<sup>th</sup>. The awards brunch is open to the public as a way for future competitors and non-birders alike to experience the camaraderie that exists between competitors as well as meet other birders and possibly pick up some tips on birding and birding spots.

Visit the Birding Blitz website <http://www.birdingblitz.org> where you can view details about the categories, download the rules, pledge, and registration forms, and check out last year's winners and winning species totals.

If you would like to help the cause but prefer not to participate, please consider pledging to a competing team. Pledges can be made per species seen or in a lump donation. Or you can donate to SIAS for the Friends of Cache River Watershed in support of all teams. Past donations have helped in the construction of the Michael Wolff Wetlands and in the recent acquisition of 80 acres of additional wetlands along the Cache corridor. *The Blitz is coordinated by the SIAS.*

### **May 4 (& 5) – Spring Bird Counts**

This year Spring Bird Counts will take place on one of two days. Illinois Spring Bird Counts are designated county by county, with nearly all state counties participating. With low to no participation in some counties, it was determined that offering 2 days for Spring Bird Counts could increase participation in those under surveyed counties.

The following local counts will be held on Saturday the 4<sup>th</sup>. Contact the compiler listed for details: Williamson Co. - Vicki Lang-Mendenhall at 618.697.9868; Jackson Co. - Rhonda Rothrock at 618.684.6605 or [woodthrusheola@hotmail.com](mailto:woodthrusheola@hotmail.com); Union Co. - Vern Kleen at 217.636.8476. If you would like to help count birds in another county this year and do not know the compiler for that county contact Tara Beveroth, Avian Field Coordinator with the Illinois Natural History Survey, at [beveroth@illinois.edu](mailto:beveroth@illinois.edu).

### **May 11 – Cache River Nature Fest**

This year's Nature Fest will be held (rain or shine) on Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup> from 9:00am to 4:00pm at the Cache River Wetlands Center, 8885 State Route 37 South, Cypress.

This year's activities include an early morning birding hike at Heron Pond as well as hiking, canoeing, amphibian & reptile exhibit, fish ID exhibit, native bird banding, and live wildlife presentations. And don't miss the chance to sample deep fried Asian Carp.

All activities are free. For a full listing of activities, visit <http://www.cacherivernaturefest.org>. Pre-registration is required for canoe tours; phone Cypress Creek NWR at 618.634.2231 to reserve a space or for more information. Visitors may register for other tours and hikes the day of the event at the Cache River Wetlands Center.



### **25th Annual Tropical Adventure / May 23-30 2013**

Trinidad & Tobago: Experience a tropical evergreen rain forest, a mangrove, tide pools, a tropical deciduous forest, a giant Leatherback Turtle watch, and West Indian cuisine. Land Cost: \$1375 (with ten participants, includes all meals, lodging, and field trips with local naturalist guides). For information, contact: Nelda W. Hinckley at 618.549.5588 or [neldahinckley@jalc.edu](mailto:neldahinckley@jalc.edu)



## Seeing Birds...

Spring is in the air! Daffodils are blooming, trees are budding, Eastern Bluebird pairs are checking out nesting sights. male American Goldfinches are molting into their yellow courting feathers, the few Chipping Sparrows that overwintered here are singing, and Dark-eyed Juncos are fattening up in advance of their migration back north to the boreal forests of Canada.

## The celebration of LaRue Pine Hills Appreciation Day will be returning to a once-every-two-years schedule.

*No Pine Hills Day this year.* Sue Hirsch, Public Affairs Specialist Conservation Ed. Coordinator with the Shawnee National Forest is seeking potential partners who can assist with all facets of the event sponsorship. If you know any organization or individual who would be interested in helping with providing tour guides, materials, promotion, outreach, or guest speakers, please forward their contact information to Sue at 618.253.1005 or shirsch@fs.fed.us.

The first returning Ruby-throated Hummingbirds have been reported in the Gulf Coast states. Folks can daily track northern migration of hummers at this site: <http://hummingbirds.net/map.html>. So, it's nearing time to hang out hummer feeders for those early arriving males. And, at this time of year, it never hurts to make nectar with a dash more sugar than average.

Don Mullison spotted a Loggerhead Shrike along IL Rt. 3 in Union County. Sadly, sightings of shrikes have become too few and too far between. With the exception of a couple areas at Arklands/Pyramid St. Pk. and various spots in Massac, Johnson, and Pulaski Counties, shrikes are gone from many of their previous reported southernmost IL locations.

In early March, Karen Kaufman made a late afternoon visit to Arklands/Pyramid St. Pk. in search of Short-eared Owls and reports she located several hunting there. (Best viewing time is just prior to dusk on clear evenings but soon they'll be heading north.)

Several folks have reported witnessing American Woodcocks performing their aerial mating displays. Watch and listen for them, in habitat where woods meet fields, just before sunset on clear evenings. Listen for their peenting from on the ground.

On 03/11 Frank Bennett spotted Tree Swallows and Purple Martins over the north end of Mermet Lake.

Any day now someone will be reporting the arrival of the first Louisiana Waterthrush of the season. A trail near a creek at Giant City State Park is a likely spot for a first encounter, as is the Heron Pond Trail, the trail at Pomona's Cave Creek Valley, or along the road around Mermet Lake. Pine Warblers, Barn Swallows, and the tiny but vocally persistent Blue-gray Gnatcatchers should be arriving soon as well. Then next will be Northern Parulas. The rest of our migratory warblers and songbirds will begin to appear, like magic, in mid to late April. Here's to a lovely, loud, well-attended spring migration! *-Rhonda R.*

## Enlightened Conservation in the Third World by Donnie R. Dann

Our planet continues to lose its natural habitats. Tropical forests, coral reefs, native grasslands and other precious havens that provide humans with the biodiversity necessary to support life are disappearing at an increasingly alarming rate. To remedy this, well-meaning conservation organizations urge third world countries to set aside portions of their pristine places as "national parks." But will this action really avoid deforestation, conversion to agriculture, and wildlife poaching?

Far too often, experience has demonstrated that a mere declaration of land as a protected park becomes just another "paper park" and a far cry from achieving real conservation. Rosaleen Duffy, in her 2010 book *Nature Crime: How We're Getting Conservation Wrong*, investigates and exposes the failings of international conservation efforts. She told the Guardian that when wildlife reserves are established, local communities suddenly find that their everyday subsistence activities, such as hunting and collecting wood, have been outlawed. This outcome could be the opposite of what's intended.

Many environmental groups are recognizing that to achieve valid habitat and wildlife protection you must have the buy-in of local people. Here are comments from the CEOs of three effective conservation organizations on the role of the people who live in these communities.

George Fenwick, American Bird Conservancy "Community engagement is a necessary component of our conservation work in almost every project in which we work. Local people need to be aware of the benefits that the birds, the biodiversity and the ecosystem services provide them, and they need to be offered ways to make a living while still respecting the protected area. While guards may be critical in stopping many illegal activities, without the support of the local community there can never be enough guards to keep a reserve protected."

Mark Tercek, The Nature Conservancy "We need to get better at connecting nature to what concerns people most—how to make their lives better, protect their health, create jobs, and get the economy moving."

Brett Jenks, Rare Center "The people who inhabit the world's most biologically diverse forests, grasslands, and coastlines have a disproportionate influence over the conservation of natural resources. Conservation is about people. Without their involvement, without their active leadership, conservation never works. This is the philosophy that guides all of Rare's work in 50 countries and thousands of communities around the world."

If you have the privilege of traveling to areas of high biodiversity that are being pressured by the forces of development, recognize that the dollars you spend on restaurants, lodges, nature guides, etc—especially those sponsored by local conservation organizations—all help with their enduring protection. Many ecotourism companies set aside a portion of your fees just for this purpose. Travel aside, support these and similar groups that protect the natural world and improve the lives of local people.

Donnie R. Dann lives in northern Illinois and is on the board of multiple conservation organizations including the Bird Conservancy Network and The Nature Conservancy. Donnie writes monthly Conservation Alerts that may be excerpted, reproduced or circulated without limitation.

✂—cut here and return with dues—cut here and return with dues—✂✂✂✂—cut here and return with dues—cut here and return with dues—✂

## -- Join SIAS Renew Your Membership --

To join or renew your membership, fill in the following form and return it along with your dues to:

**Southern Illinois Audubon Society** Individual member \$15  
Attn.: Membership Additional member in a family \$10  
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Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Annual membership renewal month is January and coincides with board elections held at the annual meeting in January. Member address labels reflect current dues status.

I/we would like to receive my newsletter via email. YES or NO

## 45 days to tell President Obama to reject Keystone XL

The U.S. State Department just released their latest report that refuses to acknowledge Keystone XL's huge impact on the climate and recently launched a 45-day public comment period on their review. The recently released Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement is said to ignore the pipeline's significant risks. And it appears the State Department actually used one of Trans-Canada's own contractors to help them write the report. The clock is now ticking on what will likely be the last chance to officially weigh in to stop the climate-killing Keystone XL tar sands project, before the President makes his decision later this year.

We need to make it clear to the Obama administration that Americans oppose the Keystone XL pipeline. Please join in urging President Obama to reject Keystone XL. Tell President Obama to look at the climate, not at this report – submit your official comment against Keystone XL and the world's dirtiest oil today. Write President Obama or sign the Sierra Club's petition at <http://action.sierraclub.org/LastBestChance>.

*A Big Thank You to all SIAS members who have already renewed their membership dues for 2013. If you haven't yet renewed you dues, please don't forget to...we count on all of you!*

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### SIAS Board of Directors

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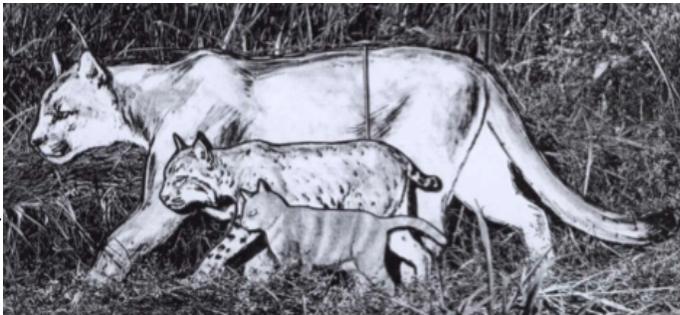
## Purrrspective



Mountain lion (also known as puma, cougar, panther, painter, and catamount) attacks on humans are extremely rare. In North America, roughly 25 fatalities and 95 nonfatal attacks have been reported during the past 100 years. Black bear attacks occur at higher rates, 50 fatalities in the past 100 years. It is important to keep these numbers in perspective. For every one person killed by a black bear, 45 people are killed by domestic dogs, 120 by bee stings, and 250 by lightning strikes.

If you encounter a bear or mountain lion, do not escalate the situation by approaching, crowding around, or chasing the animal. Pick up small children so they do not run, scream, or panic. Restrain dogs. Maintain eye contact, raise your arms to look bigger and back away slowly. For a bear or mountain lion that has climbed up a tree, the best things you can do is leave it alone. Because these animals are naturally afraid of humans, any animal that feels cornered will be looking for an escape route. By keeping people and pets away, you give these animals the best chance to come down from the tree and leave on their own.

Relative sizes of a cougar, bobcat, and a housecat.



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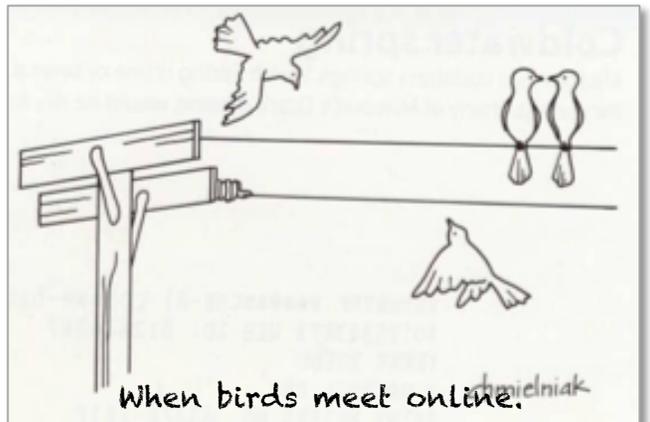
*Affiliate of the Illinois Audubon Society,  
the Illinois Environmental Council,  
& the North American Bluebird Society*

Louisiana Waterthrush by Louis Agassiz Fuertes



## Shell Oil Company recently announced that they will not drill in the Arctic Ocean in 2013!

But this good news comes with a caveat. Shell's promise is to "pause" drilling this year, not shut it down altogether. The Arctic is home to indigenous communities whose culture, history, and livelihoods are tied to these lands and waters. It is also the habitat of many forms of iconic wildlife including polar bears, arctic foxes, and whales. Many species are already threatened because of the effects of man-made climate change, but would be put at even greater risk if Shell continues with its irresponsible plans to drill. If we want Shell to keep its dirty rigs and unsafe equipment out of our pristine Arctic waters, we need our government to take a stand against Arctic drilling.



Don't forget to save Your Stamps for the IAS Land Acquisition Fund. ☞

Bring 'em to any SIAS meeting!

For more info visit: [www.illinoisaudubon.org](http://www.illinoisaudubon.org)