



Southern Illinois Audubon Society

January 2014 – Vol. 21, No. 1

NEWSLETTER

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

Established in 1970

Habitat Buffers and the Plight of the Bobwhite

is the title of a program to be presented on Friday, Jan. 24, at 8 p.m. by Brady Neiles, Graduate Student with the Cooperative Wildlife Research Laboratory at SIUC Carbondale.

In 2004, the Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds (or CP-33) practice was established under the federal Conservation Reserve Program with the goal of increasing native grassland bird habitat via private landowner participation. Through this program, farmers receive various incentives to establish and maintain 30'-to-150'-wide strips of preferred habitat along crop field margins for a contractual period of 10-15 years. Brady's study focuses on examining the efficacy of CP-33 buffers in southern Illinois at recruiting and sustaining northern bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) and other grassland bird species.

Brady graduated from the University of Wyoming in 2009 with a degree in Wildlife & Fisheries Biology & Management. He then traveled the western states working wildlife technician jobs. With four years worth of field positions, Brady had the opportunity to study many taxa such as carnivores, like the Pacific fisher and American marten, and many bird species including the Interior Least Tern and Piping Plover, Greater Sage-Grouse and an assortment of grassland birds and waterfowl. Born and raised a South Dakotan, he felt a need to come back to and work in grassland ecosystems.

SIAS will be returning to the Fellowship Hall of the First United Methodist Church, 214 W. Main St., Carbondale, for this and all future programs and meetings. The Fellowship Hall is on the lower level of the Church. Take the elevator or stairway down to the Hall.

The evening will begin with a potluck dinner followed by a short business meeting. Set-up starts at 6 p.m. with the potluck starting at 6:30 p.m. SIAS will provide the main course and some beverages. Bring an entree to share and your own dinnerware and utensils.

This meeting will include an election of officers. The slate of officers to be elected/reelected are: Conservation/Education - Cathie Hutcheson, Finance Chair - Greg Kupiec, and Outings Chair - Trevor Hinckley.

SIAS will hold a silent auction and a door prize(s) drawing as part of the evening's events. Members are encouraged to bring new or lightly used items for the auction or to be given as door prizes (and a little spending cash.) Folks giving auction items are asked to suggest a value at which to start the bidding.

The books donated by John Dycus from the estate of Terry L. Moulton will be available at the meeting. Mr. Dycus stated that Terry L. Moulton worked thirty-four years at Norge/Matag in Herrin where he was a "set up" man for the equipment. Mt. Moulton hardly ever missed work and received several attendance awards. He was a big man, very big physically, with a big heart that matched but loved to pull practical jokes. Mr. Moulton loved Mr. Dycus' family as well and would be the first one to help any of them in need. Mr. Moulton also loved watching and feeding birds. He would buy 6 to 7 bags of feed in one trip. While he was recovering from knee surgery, he had Mr. Dycus feed the birds everyday until he was able to do it himself.

2014 Meetings Calendar

February 28th: Program Speaker to be announced.

March 28th: Tom Ulrich on Costa Rica.

April 25th: Member Slide Night!

Annual Treasurer's Report: 2013

We ended the year in excellent financial shape with \$1,970 in checking and C.D.s with the value of \$2,297 and \$2,860, a total of \$7,127 in cash assets.

Since we no longer raise funds through the sale of birdseed, our members have stepped forward with great generosity. In 2013 they contributed \$450 in extra donations to SIAS. We thank the following for their gifts: Valerie Blakely, Mike Brown, Mary Dresser, Linda Dutcher, Carolyn Ferdinand, Sylvia Greenfield, Esther and Denny Hays, Nelda Hinckley, Greg Kupiec, Richard LaSalle, Liz Loomis, Mike McNerny, Dean Paulsmeyer, and Laraine Wright. Special thanks must go to Nelda Hinckley whose donations for many years have paid for our affiliate dues to the Illinois Audubon Society.

We received gifts-in-kind from Nelda Hinckley, Vicki Lang-Mendenhall, and Rhonda Rothrock - items for raffles at our regular meetings that raised \$150 for SIAS. And we thank Jim Shofstall for his support of our Website.

Finally, we are very grateful for everyone who donated an item for our annual silent auction last January and certainly for those who placed bids. That event alone raised \$373.50.

One of the main reasons we seek extra income is to support projects in our region to benefit the environment and wildlife. In 2013 we made contributions to Carbondale Public Library (\$35, magazine subscription), Crab Orchard NWR bluebird trail (\$189.96, boxes and cone guards), Free Again (\$100, bird rescue), Friends of Cache River (\$400, habitat restoration), Illinois Audubon Society (\$200, Land Acquisition Fund endowment), and Illinois Ornithological Society (\$500, research grant for SIUC grad student). - *Laraine Wright, Treasurer*

Have you renewed your dues?

Check the "paid to" date on your mailing label.

A renewal form is at the end of the newsletter.

Two Whooping Cranes Illegally Shot In Hopkins County Kentucky

A mated pair of Whooping Cranes was found dead in western Kentucky in November, likely victims of an illegal shooter. Federal authorities kept the killing quiet while gathering evidence but are now going public in search of information and are offering a reward for evidence leading to the capture of the perpetrator(s).

Both Whooping Cranes were captive bred in Maryland and graduates of the Operation Migration program that teaching cranes to migrate between Wisconsin and Florida. The female, crane 905 hatched in 2009, was shot with a rifle. The remains of the male, crane 733 hatched in 2007, were found nearby and assumed to have been shot.

The deaths occurred well ahead of Kentucky's newly instituted Sand Hill Crane hunting season. Waterfowl hunters using the area are not suspects because they use shotguns.

The investment in each crane easily exceeds \$200,000, along with "the hopes and dreams of a huge team of people" said Joe Duff, cofounder and chief executive officer of Operation Migration. Duff had been the ultra-light pilot who led both of the cranes on their first journey south.

The penalty for killing a Whooping Crane is as much as \$100,000 and one year in jail. Excerpts from the 01/15/14 Courier-Journal. http://www.courier-journal.com/article/20140114/NEWS01/301140085/Reward-offered-whooping-cranes-illegally-shot-Western-Kentucky?nclick_check=1



Upcoming Events & Outings

Jan. 25 & 26 – Eagle Tours at Crab Orchard NWR

Crab Orchard NWR is holding their annual Eagle Tours on Saturday and Sunday. **Reservations are required.** Phone the Refuge at 618.997.3344 for full details or to register

Feb. 9-18 – Vern's Birding Tours: Costa Rica

This 10-day excursion to Costa Rica, the wildlife sanctuary of the Americas, has again been designed especially for Vern's Birding Tours. For full details and reservations, contact Vernon Kleen, 1825 Clearview Drive, Springfield, IL.

Feb.-May – Movie Nights at the Cache Wetlands Center

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.

Feb. 6- What Plants Talk About; **March 6** - The Private Life of Deer;

April 3- Bees: Tales from the Hive; **May 1** - The Secret World of Bats
Staff will hold a short discussion after each movie. For more info, phone Cypress Creek NW Refuge at 618.634.2231.

Feb. 8 – Cache Volunteer Orientation for Frog & Toad Surveys

Join the folks at the Cache from 1-3 p.m. to learn about the 19 frog and toad species found here and how you can help protect these valuable critters. Interested volunteers will learn how to conduct frog and toad surveys four times; February through June. For more information, call the Cache River Wetlands Center at 618.657.2064.

Feb. 14-17 – The 17th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count!

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are.

Everyone is welcome—from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds.

Participants tally the number of individual birds of each species they see during their count period then enter these numbers on the GBBC website. New participants must set up a free GBBC account to submit their checklists or use login information from an existing account for any other Cornell Lab citizen-science project. Visit their website to learn more or to register. <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/howto.html>

Feb. 20-May 15 – Master Naturalist Course-Crab Orchard NWR

The Master Naturalist Course is being offered at Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, on Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 20th thru May 15th at the Crab Orchard Visitor's Center. Contact the Refuge at 618.997.3344 for complete details and to register.

The Friends of Crab Orchard Refuge have decided to offer a scholarship for this Master Naturalist course. The deadline for scholarship application is Feb. 6th. For an application, phone 618.998.5933 or visit their Facebook page. at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/115481818500360/>

Feb. 22 – Butterflies at the Cache

Prepare for the coming out of butterflies in the spring by learning to identify some common butterflies and their larva (caterpillars). Receive information on flower garden food plants for the larva as well as flowering plants rich in nectar for the adult butterflies. The program will be presented by Master Naturalist Anne Parmley at the Cache River Wetland's Center starting at 1 p.m. For more info, call the Cache River Wetlands Center at 618.657.2064.



April 5 – Wildflowers of Southern IL Class at JALC

Take this class learn how to identify wildflowers, view the wildflowers on the John A Logan College campus, take close look at wildflower specimens under a microscope and take a field trip during the second session. No tests or quizzes—just interesting facts and information. Fee: \$25.00. Contact John A Logan College for details or to register.

April 26 – The 13th Annual Birding Blitz of Southernmost Illinois

It's time to set up your team and plan your strategy!
<http://www.birdingblitz.org>

Seeing Birds



Winter provides many opportunities to see birds in large numbers as tens of thousands of waterfowl migrate to southernmost IL.

On 11/27, Trevor Hinckley reported a first winter White-winged Scoter at the Carbondale east sewage treatment plant. The Scoter was swimming with a group of Buffleheads near the center of the main pond and was easily visible from the road. There were also several dozen Northern Shovelers present on the same pond.

On the morning of 12/13, Liz Loomis was thrilled to view a flock of about 15 Sandhill Cranes flying east over her home.

On the morning of 12/21, Frank Bennett's birddog Annie jumped an American Woodcock on the edge of the woods right behind Frank and Myra's house. It was the first woodcock Frank had seen this season.

The 114th annual Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) provided many opportunities to see birds, and lots of them.

Twelve participants in 6 teams tallied 97 species of birds, 256930 actual birds, during the Mermet Lake CBC held on 12/30. Highlights included a Spotted Sandpiper, Great Egret, and Chipping Sparrow. Trevor Hinckley and his team reported over 200 Black Vultures in one location where a farmer had curiously laid out several dead hogs.

Eleven participants in 5 teams tallied 83 species, 29325 actual birds, during the Jackson County CBC held (annually) on New Year's Day. The morning of New Year's Day was absolutely breathtaking, with a clear sky, only minimum wind, and many active songbirds. Those folks who were out for pre-dawn birding were treated to the occasional Quadrantid meteor shooting by overhead in the clear, star-filled night sky. The Kvernes family again hosted count compilation at the end of the day. Participants feasted on their choice of 3 superb soups prepared by the great Chief Anton. We were all very grateful to David and his sons for their wonderful hospitality at the end of the long day of birding. This CBC is the perfect way to ring in the new year!

On 01/10, Cathie Hutcheson located 3 Rough-legged Hawks along the Mississippi River Levee Road, west of Reynoldsville, in Union County. Two were a dark phase while the other was a light phase.

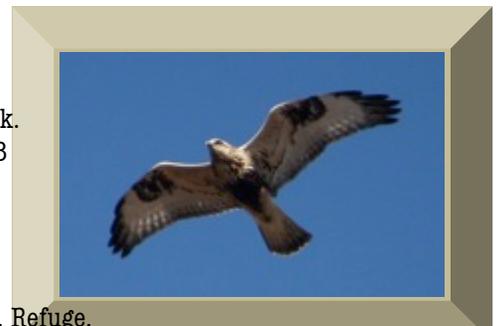
Crab Orchard NWR hosted their 3rd annual Christmas Bird Count for Kids on 01/11. Over 40 kids and their parents participated in 3 teams lead by Vicki Lang-Mendenhall, Don Mullison, and Veronica Kelly. The kids identified twenty-eight species were located, more than 9000 birds.

On the way home from the Kids CBC on 01/11, Vicki Lang spotted 2 Rough-legged Hawks near the Lick Creek Water District Office in Union County.

While out riding with her husband on 01/11, Nikki Martin spotted approximately 150-200 Swans in a field just south of Royalton on IL Rt. 149, but Nikki couldn't tell whether they were Trumpeters, Tundras, or combination. They then drove north, taking the Elkhaville-Royalton blacktop. After about a mile, they spotted another, smaller small group of Swans much closer to the road in a cornfield, 3 adults and 2 juveniles. A few weeks earlier, a single Swan flew in front of the Martins while they were driving along Rt. 149 near the Big Muddy (between DeSoto and Hurst-Bush).

Cathie Hutcheson and Nancy Garwood surveyed Union County for eagles on 01/12 as part of the Mid-Winter Eagle Survey. Cathie

caught a photo of this light phase Rough-legged Hawk. The Duo counted 8 adult and 5 immature Bald Eagles and 1 immature Golden Eagle at Union Co. Refuge.



A Message from IL Dept. of Natural Resources Director Marc Miller – Is there a future for mountain lions, wolves and black bears in Illinois?

The recent occurrence of a mountain lion in Whiteside County has generated much public discussion about the future of this species in Illinois. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources welcomes that discussion, and believes it's equally important to talk about the possible return of other apex predators such as the gray wolf and the American black bear.

While we believe this and other recent confirmed mountain lion sightings are isolated occurrences for now, we have been actively preparing for the time when mountain lions, wolves, and black bears may once again establish populations in the state. We have funded scientific research where suitable habitat models have been developed for these species, and have also researched attitudes and opinions of Illinoisans regarding these large carnivores.

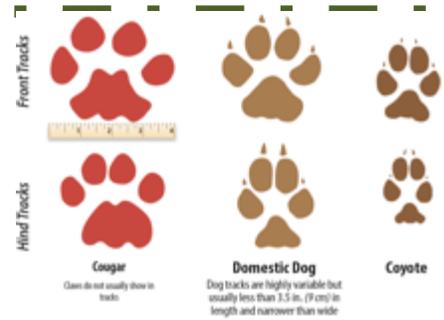
In the spring of 2011, we supported a bill in the General Assembly (HB 1437) that sought to add the gray wolf, American black bear, and mountain lion to the list of protected species under the Illinois Wildlife Code. While that effort was not successful, the IDNR remains interested in finding ways to achieve protections for these animals by working cooperatively with a wide range of constituencies.

We believe there is room on our Illinois landscape for apex predators, but these species also will require management as they re-establish and grow in numbers to deal with human-wildlife interactions, nuisance animals, and to keep a balance in predator-prey numbers within suitable habitat areas. Placing the species on the protected list is a necessary step.

The agency is also trying to educate and inform residents on wildlife-human interactions and their role in wildlife management, and has worked with the University of Illinois Extension to develop a useful website, "Living with Wildlife in Illinois": <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/wildlife/>

While our attitude surveys revealed that a large number of people in Illinois support carnivore protection, they also show that a majority of people don't want them close to their home. Like so many of the resources that we manage, we recognize that there are differing views on how mountain lions, and other large predators, should be managed within the state.

Our current work is focused on understanding people's views on these carnivores and other wildlife, including urban and rural residents and all other cross-sections of citizens in the state, and then using that information to manage this resource in a way that best meets the needs and expectations of our



residents. In the near future we will be sharing the results of public surveys on these issues on the "Living with Wildlife" website.

Aldo Leopold, the father of modern conservation, wrote his 1933 book *Game Management* at the time when much of North America's big game animals, like wolves and deer, were nearly extinct, and the wildlife management profession was beginning to be institutionalized. Leopold stated, "The hope of the future lies not in curbing the influence of human occupancy – it is already too late for that – but in creating a better understanding of the extent of that influence and a new ethic for its governance."

In the eighty years since, we have seen great strides in conservation and species recovery, including deer, wild turkeys, coyotes, beaver, raccoons, river otters and large carnivores. Countless sportsmen, land owners, conservationists, environmentalists, and natural resource professionals have all played a significant part in these accomplishments.

Now we must focus on the next step of creating a better understanding and new ethics to support the future management and protection of large carnivores in Illinois.

From the Jan. 2014 *Inside Illinois DNR*, Vol. 2 No. 1

A Birder's Guide to Everything

A new movie about birding starring Ben Kinsley has just come out. "A Birder's Guide to Everything" is a "coming-of-age" comedy about teenage birders on a road trip in search of a bird believed extinct and the answers to some of life questions.

"At the heart of the film is a sweetness and naiveté about life, love, and loss. Simply put, this film's got a little something for everyone, birder or not. Who knew the hunt for an extinct bird could be so satisfying?" – *Audubon Magazine*
<http://www.abirdersguidetoeverything.com/>

To view a trail of the movie, visit:
<http://www.nytimes.com/video/science/100000002172767/a-birders-guide-to-everything.html>

The movie has won second place in the Audience Award at the Tribeca Film Festival.

Pebble Mine Still a Looming Threat to Alaska

Canada's Northern Dynasty Minerals is the last company left standing behind the disastrous Pebble Mine. Two of the Mine's biggest corporate backers – Mitsubishi and Britain's Anglo American – have already walked away from this reckless project. Rio Tinto, a third corporate backer, recently sent strong signals that it too is looking to exit. But Northern Dynasty Minerals has left no doubt that it is bulldozing ahead with its plan for a toxic mega-mine that could devastate Alaska's spectacular Bristol Bay.

The Pebble Mine is a disaster waiting to happen. The EPA has just concluded its study confirmed that this gargantuan, open-pit copper and gold operation – along with its estimated 10 billion tons of mining waste – carries catastrophic risk for Bristol Bay, its legendary salmon runs, its pristine environment, and its people. While the conclusions are damning, Dennis McLerren, administrator for the EPA region encompassing Alaska and the Pacific Northwest, said they are purely scientific and will not immediately affect any regulatory decision – though the report will be used for future decisions.

Please send a message to Northern Dynasty's CEO, telling him to abandon this wilderness-destroying scheme. Visit the National Resources Defense Council's website <https://secure.nrdconline.org/> then click on the Pebble Mine link. Or write

**Ron Thiessen, President and CEO, Northern Dynasty Minerals,
 15th Floor - 1040 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6E 4H1**

To Join SIAS or Renew Your Membership, please fill in this form and return it with payment. Thank You!

Individual Member \$15

Additional Family Member \$10

Student Voting Member \$ 5

Donation _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Your Name _____

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Mail to:

Southern Illinois Audubon Society

Attn: Membership

P.O. Box 222

Carbondale, IL 62903-0222

I/We would like to received our newsletter via email: YES / NO

Annual membership renewal month is January and coincides with board elections held at the annual meeting each January.

Member mailing labels reflect current dues status.

Let's (Finally) Get the Lead Out by Donnie R. Dann, Bird Conservancy Network, 01.2014

When I was a kid, we molded lead into toy soldiers. We've learned a lot since that era. Lead can be a serious health and environmental problem, but surprisingly, its use continues. If swallowed, lead is poisonous to humans and also to a variety of wildlife. Lead accumulates in the body over the years and can cause serious health issues, even in small quantities. It affects the nervous system and can impair the bloodstream and cause brain damage. It is especially harmful to small children.

State and federal governments have taken many actions to reduce the amount of lead in our environment. Lead was initially banned from gasoline in 1973 and was fully phased out by 1986. Lead was banned from household paint in 1978, and in 2010 the EPA ruled that in remodels of homes built before 1978, workers must be certified if a specified amount of paint will be disturbed. Lead shot was banned for waterfowl hunting in 1991, and recently California became the first state to ban lead in ammunition for all other hunting.

Yet lead remains in widespread use. Sportsmen use it in shooting sports, hunting and fishing tackle. Lead's industrial uses are extensive: as a radiation shield; in batteries; in building construction; in certain electronics; in some chemical compounds, and more. Lead also potentially exists in pipes that bring water to and from houses built before 1978. Lead also occurs in nature, but only in very small amounts. We should be doing everything possible to minimize the use of lead in our environment. Lead continues to be a serious health and environmental problem, but with thoughtful safeguards its impact

Newsletter contributions welcome,
contact Rhonda Rothrock at:
618.684.6605 or
woodthrusheola@hotmail.com
SIAS Webmaster: Jim Shofstall
SIAS Website:
<http://www.siaudubon.org>

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Don't forget to save stamps for the IAS Land Acquisition fund.
Bring them to any SIAS meeting.

American Bird Conservancy & Black Swamp Bird Observatory Put Poorly Sited Wind Project on Notice

The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) is collaborating with the Black Swamp Bird Observatory (BSBO) to stop a poorly-sited wind energy project at Camp Perry, Ohio, near the southern shore of Lake Erie by issuing a letter of intent to sue over this project, located in the center of one of the largest and most important bird migration bottlenecks in the U.S. and which has the potential to impact endangered Kirtland's Warblers and Piping Plovers, and well as Bald Eagles and other federally-protected migratory bird species. The south shore of Lake Erie is also the location of a major birding event, attracting tens of thousands of people annually, and injecting \$37 million into the local economy.

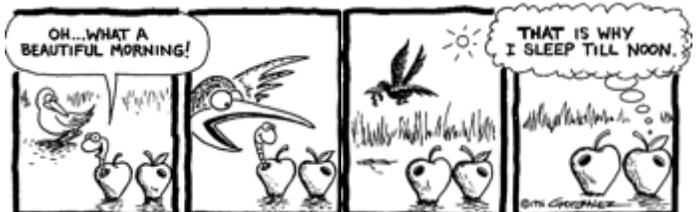
Despite serious concerns expressed by the USFWS, Ohio DNR, and many conservation organizations, the impacts of this project on protected birds, the Ohio Air National Guard has forged ahead regardless. In addition, they have refused to have an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) conducted or to go through Section 7 consultation as strongly recommended by the FWS. Many other wind projects are proposed for this area, which has been designated Red ("Critical Importance") on ABC's wind map, an area in which wind energy development is highly undesirable from the perspective of bird conservation.

ABC and BSBO therefore believe that this project must be challenged, as it represents a clear case of the failure of voluntary permitting guidelines for wind energy development to protect our nation's public trust resources under the Endangered Species Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Furthermore, this is occurring at a federally owned facility, which would set a bad precedent for wind development on both public and private lands in this region. Send your concerns to the Ohio Air National Guard at Camp Perry

via e-mail to ng.oh.oharng.mbx.pao-buckeye-guard@mail.mil
or via mail to: Col. Michael P. Skomrock, OHANG

Department of the Army and Air Force
National Guard Bureau
200th Red Horse Squadron
Camp Perry ANG Station
Port Clinton, OH 43452-9577

To examine a copy of the ABC/BSBO letter of intent to sue, go to
http://www.abcbirds.org/PDFs/camp_perry_letter_and_exhibits.pdf



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



<http://images.nationalgeographic.com/>