



Southern Illinois Audubon Society

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

NEWSLETTER

Established in 1970

Catastrophes and crayfish: geology and biodiversity in the Pacific Northwest

Is the title of a program Dr. Bronwyn Williams will present for SIAS on Friday, August 22nd at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Fellowship Hall of the First United Methodist Church, 214 W. Main St., Carbondale. Take the elevator or stairway down to the lower level Fellowship Hall.

Bronwyn's program will touch a bit on some of her ongoing research with crayfishes and their symbiotic organisms in western North America, but with a broader perspective of the geology of the area and the natural history of the organisms. The complex geologic history of western North America has had profound effects on the biodiversity of the region. Crayfishes are a diverse and common component of North American freshwaters, and have great ecologic, economic, and recreational importance, but our understanding of western North American crayfishes has been surprisingly limited. Bronwyn will discuss her work on crayfishes and two groups of organisms, crayfish worms and seed shrimp, that live on crayfishes. This "community" approach provides an interesting way of looking at the factors underlying species formation, and has important applications for conservation and management.

Dr. Bronwyn Williams is currently a postdoctoral research fellow at SIU Carbondale working as part of a multi-institution, NSF (National Science Foundation)-funded, project entitled WormNet II: Assembling the Annelid Tree of Life. She received her Ph.D. in Systematics and Evolution in 2012 from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, working on crayfishes and two groups of small organisms - worms and ostracods - that live on crayfishes. Bronwyn received a M.Sc. in Fisheries and Wildlife from Michigan State University in 2006, and a B.A. in Biology from Smith College in 1999.

Landscaping for Insectivorous Birds in Illinois

That's the title of an interesting article in the Summer 2014 issue of "Illinois Audubon" magazine. Author Randy Schietzelt encourages us to plant trees that will attract insects that are critical food sources not just for year-round residents but especially for migrants, which are in great jeopardy from habitat loss and climate change. In our area, from 75 to 98 percent of migrant warbler diets in spring come from inchworm caterpillars.

Although cardinals and cedar waxwings, for example, are well-known fruit eaters they switch almost entirely to protein when they are raising young. (As do female hummingbirds. I often have to explain this to people who worry that no hummers are visiting their sugar-water feeders in late spring and early summer.)

"Carolina chickadees need between 390 and 570 caterpillars per day to be successful with their hatchlings," Randy says.

Accompanying his article is a comprehensive list of Illinois tree and bush species on which caterpillars have been documented. Among the best, along with the number of caterpillar species, are paper birch (311), choke cherry (185), red oak (162), red maple and sugar maple (110), white pine (85), and shagbark hickory (39). I signaled out those because, yippee, I already have them in my yard, among others on the list.

As far as the very worst, literally almost no caterpillars are found on the very invasive Japanese honeysuckle, autumn olive, and Russian olive bushes. Out, out, out! Sadly, the native Kentucky coffee tree attracts only two caterpillar species, as do the lovely swamp chestnut oak and winged elm.

Joining the Illinois Audubon Society will bring you very interesting articles and photos through their quarterly magazine, "Illinois Audubon." Supporting this organization is very worthwhile for Illinois conservation issues and education. Basic membership is \$25 through www.illinoisaudubon.org.

- Laraine Wright, Treasurer

2014 Illinois Environmental Council's Legislative report

As a longtime affiliate of the Illinois Environmental Council, we have just received a summary of their lobbying and educational efforts with the state legislature for the past year. Some of the best news:

- Legislation to add the cougar, black bear, and gray wolf to the Illinois protected species list, a big help to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The IDNR also has an expanded list of invasive species for aquatic ecosystems and penalties for people releasing inappropriate fish and other animals into waterways.

- Defeat (oh, terrific news!) of the proposal to hunt bobcats in the state. Says the IEC, studies "by Illinois ecologists do not indicate that these populations have fully recovered. Predators, like bobcats, are important for overall recovery of damaged ecosystems." Many SIAS members responded to our plea to contact legislators to oppose this legislation. Thank you!

- Banning of microbeads. Ladies and gents, don't use facial or body products that contain tiny scrubbers. They eventually can absorb toxic chemicals and find their way into water systems where they are eaten by fish. Illinois is the first state to ban microbeads, but the IEC fails to say in what year this ban will begin.

The IEC also warns that the state failed to pass a full year's budget and therefore the IDNR once again faces the possibility of severe budget cuts starting in January or so. We must continue to apply pressure to our gutless legislators, telling them that they must maintain full funding for IDNR, which cannot respond to up-and-down budget changes. That type of funding threatens many essential projects that are long-term in nature. Find out more information about the IEC at www.ilenviron.org or call 217-544-5954.

- Laraine Wright, Treasurer

"Save Our Bees"

A world without bees is unthinkable: Of the 100 crops that provide 90 percent of the world's food, more than 70 are pollinated by bees. But honeybee populations have been crashing over the past eight years, with some beekeepers reporting losses of 40 to 70 percent of their hive.

Many factors are at play, but the indiscriminate use of bee-toxic pesticides known as neonicotinoids or "neonics" is a key catalyst linked to both colony loss and poor bee health. The expanded use of genetically modified crops has led to the proliferation of neonics, as they are commonly used in conjunction with GMO cropping systems.

Join our friends at TakePart and their NGO allies in a yearlong campaign to "Save Our Bees" and support efforts to restore health to bee populations crucial to our food supply.

Take action right now! Go on line to the link below. Sign the petition urging the House of Representatives to support the Saving America's Pollinators Act!
<https://takeaction.takepart.com/actions/help-save-our-bees-tell-congress-to-support-the-saving-america-s-pollinators-act?cmpid=tp-eml-justlabelit-bees>

2014 Meetings Calendar

September 26th: Program to be announced

October 24th: Program to be announced

December 5th: Nov./Dec. combined meeting-Program to be announced

Upcoming Events & Outings

August 19 – The Push to Save SI Forests and Plants: Why Sunlight is Needed & How It's Being Approached

The Southern Chapter of the Illinois Native Plant Society is hosting a presentation by SI Conservation Opportunity Area Coordinator Tracy Boutelle who will present about the woodland demonstration project at the Trail of Tears State Forest. This program will be held at the Carbondale Township Hall, 217 East Main St., Carbondale, starting at 6:30 p.m.

August 19 – "The Echo of Their Wings: The Life and Legacy of the Passenger Pigeon"-program & book signing

Author, naturalist, and birder Joel Greenberg will visit southernmost Illinois and share the tale of Martha the last Passenger Pigeon on earth and her kind. Greenberg is the author of the acclaimed *A Feathered River Across the Sky: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction*. The passenger pigeon, once the most abundant bird in the world, with a population likely in the billions was driven to extinction over the course of a few decades due mostly to unbridled killing for food and recreation.

The program takes place at the SIU Student Center Auditorium, 1255 Lincoln Dr., Carbondale. Local musical duo Carter & Connelley will open the evening at 6:30 p.m., followed by Greenberg at 7 p.m. Cosponsored by Shawnee Audubon and the SIU Sustainability Office, the evening's events are free and open to everyone.

August 29 – Astronomy at Giant City State Park

Join the Astronomical Association of Southern Illinois for a free astronomy program at the Giant City State Park Visitor Center, off Giant City Rd., Makanda, at 8:30 p.m. For details call the Park at 618.457.4836.

Sept. 13 – Giant City Stewardship Day

Do you have a group looking for a way to help your community? Giant City State Park can use your help! Come out from 9 a.m. to 1p.m. to help clean up trails and make your park a little more beautiful. For more details or to register, phone the Coordinator at 618.457.4836.

Sept. 20 – Monarch Migration Saturday

The orange and black Monarch Butterfly migrates up to 2500 miles from various North American sites to central Mexico for the winter. Monarch Watch has been tagging and monitoring migrating monarchs since 1992. Join the folks at the Cache River Wetlands Center to learn about the monarch's life habits and their journey to Mexico and back. And assist in capturing and tagging butterflies for the Monarch Watch program. Meet at the Cache River Wetlands Center at 10 a.m. For more info, call the Wetlands Center at 618.657.2064.

Sept. 27 – 50th Anniversary of Oakwood Bottoms!

Join the U.S. Forest Service, National Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, and SIAS to celebrate 50 years of Oakwood Bottoms. There will be a brief program at the Interpretive Site starting at 1 p.m. followed by tour opportunities, a birding walk, bird banding, and more.

Take IL Rt. 3, south of its intersection with IL Hwy 149, drive south on Rt. 3 to Oakwood Bottoms Rd., then turn east. Drive 2 miles then turn north to the site.

Sept. 27 – IOS Carlyle Lake Pelagic Field Trip

Keith McMullen is again coordinating the IOS annual Carlyle Lake birding field trip and pelagic tour. Meet at the McDonald's on Access Rd. off IL Rt. 127, SW of the lake at 6:30 a.m. The trip most likely will end around 7:30 p.m. Cost is \$30 for IOS members, \$50 for non-members. This covers pontoon boat rentals. Advance payment is required and can be made thru PayPal. Visit the IOS website for complete details and to register.

<http://illinoisbirds.org/> If you wish to pay by check, you can send your check A.S.A.P. to the IOS mailbox below: Illinois Ornithological Soc., PO Box 931, Lake Forest, IL 60045

Dec. 2-14 - Caribbean Conservation Trust Cuba Bird Survey

Spend 13 days in Cuba, including visits to Havana, the Zapata Swamp, Bay of Pigs, and various natural areas along the coast and in the mountains. Vern Kleen is facilitating this tour by special invitation, featuring Biologist Dr. Luis Diaz, Curator of Cuba's National Museum of Natural History.

For complete details including the price, contact Vern at 217.787.3515 or vkleen@comcast.net or Gary Markowski, Executive Director, Caribbean Conservation Trust, Inc. at 860.350.6752 or cubirds@aol.com website www.cubirds.org

4th South American Adventure: Ecuador 2015

Join Professor Nelda Hinckley and Trevor Hinckley for some eco-trekking in Ecuador, January 4-13, 2015. Begin your eco-adventure in Quito at the Puenbo Birding Garden B&B. Then spend the next 8 days visiting such places as Antisana Reserve (Andean Condors), Guango Lodge (Sword-billed Hummingbirds), the Yanacocha Reserve (6+ species of hummingbirds), Milpe Reserve (tropical tanagers), and Bella Vista Cloud Forest (birds, orchids, and butterflies).

Tour pricing is based on double-occupancy and a minimum of 10 paying participants. For complete details, including tour cost, contact Nelda at 618.549.7335 ext. 8820, 618.5649.5588, or neldahinckley@jalc.edu

50th Wilderness Anniversary Celebration

This year America celebrates "50 Years of Wilderness" as we honor the golden anniversary of the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) and the signing of the Wilderness Act of 1964. On Sept. 3, 1964, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Wilderness Act establishing our National Wilderness Preservation System.

Today, the NWPS contains 757 wilderness areas all under the management of one of these four federal agencies: Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, and National Park Service. The NWPS was established for the use and enjoyment of the people and provides many direct and in-direct benefits, such as those relating to ecological, geological, scientific, educational, scenic, spiritual, economic, recreational, historical, and cultural uses and activities. To learn more about the Wilderness Act and the NWPS, visit the official wilderness information website providing both general information about wilderness and specific information about each of the 757 wilderness areas.

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/shawnee/home/?cid=stelprd3791349>

50th Wilderness Anniversary Photo Contest

Help commemorate and celebrate the beauty and wonders of Illinois wilderness by entering your wilderness photos into the Wilderness Photo Contest. This year marks the 50th year anniversary of the 1964 Wilderness Act and you can share your wonderful Wilderness experience with others via images. By doing so you will not only help others appreciate these beautifully wild places, but also help spread awareness about the Wilderness resource. Contest begins March 1, 2014 and ends November 14, 2014.

Contest Rules & Guidelines: Photographer must be an amateur and submit original photo entries only. Photos entries must have been taken in one of the eight designated Illinois Wilderness': Bay Creek, Bald Knob, Burden Falls, Crab Orchard, Clear Springs, Garden of the Gods, Lusk Creek and Panther Den. The Contest is divided into Seasonal Categories. Photographers are to submit seasonal photos of scenes from that season. The Seasonal Contest Categories are: Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. A limit of 2 photos can be entered per Seasonal Contest (Spring, Summer, Fall, & Winter) with a maximum of 8 photos entered total per person. Photos must be in jpeg format and no smaller than 300 dpi and no larger than 1500 dpi. Photos must be submitted via email to the Friends of the Shawnee along with a completed and Photo Contest Entry Form by the specified season deadline.

<http://snffriends.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Photo-Entry-Form.pdf> Spring (deadline past); Summer Wilderness Contest Deadline – August 31, 2014; Fall Wilderness Contest Deadline – November 1, 2014; Winter Wilderness Contest Deadline – November 14, 2014.

For complete details visit:

<http://snffriends.org/50th-wilderness-anniversary-photo-contest/>

The 2014 Birding Fest of Southernmost IL- A Small Event with Big Results

Eight great teams from across Illinois participated in this year's Birding Blitz on April 26th. Most of the 23 participants were veterans of past competitions but one new team participated and a couple teams had new members. The weather cooperated with rain only in the pre-dawn hours, partial sun throughout the day, coolish temps, and only occasional moderate wind gusts

This year three teams competed in the Open A (true Big Day) category, the SI Hotshots (Keith McMullen and Leroy Harrison), the DuPage Dippers (Joan Norek, Jeff Smith, Steve Fluett, and Phil Doncheck), and the Warblermasters (Pete Moxen, Matt Westrand, and Jude Vickory). This made for quite a competition as these three teams searched the southernmost 11 counties for as many species as they could find. The Hotshots pulled off the category win with 159 species to the Warblermasters' 149 and the Dippers' 113. The Hotshots were the overall Blitz winners as well, locating more species than any competing team. Their team name and species total will be engraved on a plate of a plaque that hangs on the wall at the Cache River Wetlands Center.

The County Big Day category was also quite competitive this year, with 3 teams birding in 3 separate counties, competing to win. The County Hunters (Craig Taylor and Steve Bailey) tallied 133 in Jackson County to win over Team COS (Christine & Geoff Williamson and Phylliss Petrilli) with 118 species from Pope County and the Crab Orchard Orioles (Trevor Hinckley and Joe Merkelbach) with 130 species from Williamson County.

The Old Coots (Nelda Hinckley, Richard LaSalle, and Dennis Hale) was the only team competing in the "55 or Better" category. They located a total 80 species for the day. There was only one team in the Muscle-Powered category as well this year, the Cocoa-billed Cuckoos (Vicki Lang-Mendenhall, Don Mullison, Steven Juhlin, and Rhonda Rothrock) who ended their day with 117 species.

The combined total number of individual species seen was 187. It represents a great big day of birding for all and reflects the quality of habitat that exists in our southernmost 11 counties.

Members of all winning teams receive a certificate. Along with certificates, members of teams that won in categories with competition each receive an extra prize. For the past several years these prizes have been Federal Duck Stamps, providing the bearer free access to all USFW refuges for a year. By purchasing Federal Duck Stamps as prizes, the cost of the prizes goes toward habitat restoration. This goes hand in hand with the conservation goal of the Birding Blitz: to raise funds, in the form of pledges, for habitat restoration and preservation in the Cache River Wetlands. Pledges received for this year's Blitz total \$3,081! In just the last 8 years, the Birding Blitz participants have raised over \$27,500 for habitat restoration and preservation in the Cache. They and their generous benefactors are appreciated more than words can say. - Rhonda R.

Interesting bird facts from recent research

At the annual Illinois bluebird monitors meeting in April, the keynote speaker was Laura Erickson of Duluth, Minn. She is a longtime naturalist and prolific writer who last year unintentionally completed a Lower 48 Big Year, placing third in the nation with a total of more than 500 species.

Chickadees are among her favorite birds. Laura said research shows they are as smart as crows, capable of more learned behavior than merely instinctive. That's why migrants often pick chickadees to group with for finding local food sources and for safety (the more "dees" a chickadee utters, the greater the warning of nearby danger).

We know how small chickadees are (Laura said you can send three of them through the mail using just one stamp). But they can remember where they have stored more than 1,000 seeds. They selectively allow brain neurons to die to allow more room for remembering next winter's seed cache.

Chickadees can live 12 years. They are easy to train for hand feeding. A bird Laura had banded and fed mealworms by hand to in her yard returned two years later to once again explore her hand for food. A member of the tit family in Europe, which is very similar to our chickadees, learned to open milk bottle caps in England and within a few years in the 1920s had taught many other tits to do the same thing. In 1929, the dairy industry had to change the design of milk bottles to prevent theft.

Apparently the first chickadee to discover milk came from its curiosity about food in general. Laura then explained that blue jays are also omnivores. They've been observed taking only a tiny taste of something new and then waiting for about 15 minutes to decide if it was okay to eat more of the new food.

Among her other bird facts, Laura said that while owls bond with each other individually, raptors generally bond with the nest itself. Among white-throated sparrows, a female with a white head stripe will pick a male with a tan head stripe, and vice versa: opposites attract. Crows and blue jays, which stay together year round in social groups, will take care of injured birds in their communities.

Finally, she reminded us that there are many videos on the internet that show birds using objects as tools to perform certain tasks. For example, there is a recording of a green heron taking pieces of bread and dunking them at water's edge to attract fish. - Laraine Wright.

* * * * *

Belated congratulations to Laraine! At the annual meeting of Illinois Bluebird monitors in April (2014), Laraine Wright was honored as Bluebirder of the Year. As per my memory, Laraine has been a bluebird monitor at Crab Orchard NWR since 1994, and possibly prior to that date. Laraine later took over as coordinator of Crab Orchard NWR bluebird monitors and took on management of the trail at Giant City State Park as well. SIAS and all bluebirds greatly appreciate all your efforts Laraine.

-Rhonda R.

Fuel stores, time of spring, and movement behavior influence stopover duration of Red-eyed Vireo

Long-distance migration (in birds) is characterized by periods of flight, when energy stores are consumed, and periods of stopover, when energy stores are replenished. Duration of the migratory period is largely determined by time spent at stopover sites. The time constraints imposed on spring migrants should act to minimize the time spent on migration, yet spring migrants often remain at stopover sites for extended periods. Scientists measured the influence of arrival fuel stores, arrival date, and foraging movement rate on the duration of Red-eyed Vireos (*Vireo olivaceus*) that remained at stopover sites for more than 1 day. They captured spring migrants in mist-nets as they arrived after crossing the Gulf of Mexico then released them at an inland site and continuously followed (radio-tracked) their movements until departure. Departure time was confirmed with extensive ground searches and aerial surveys.

Migrants remained at the stopover sites from 1 to 8 days (2.80 ± 0.14 days). Less than one-third of migrants were transient, leaving the night following release (32 %). Of the migrants that remained more than 1 day, those that arrived with low fuel stores remained longer than those that arrived with more fuel stores. Only migrants arriving early in the spring stayed for extended periods of time (>5 days). Further, migrants that moved faster within the stopover landscape presumably replenished fuel stores faster because they did not remain as long as migrants that did not move as quickly. When arrival fuel stores, arrival day, and departure day were known, scientists found multiple factors influenced the length of stay at spring stopover sites. Early spring migrants with low fuel stores that moved slowly through the landscape spent the most time at spring stopover sites. From a study by Emily B. Cohen, Frank R. Moore, Richard A. Fischer http://collections.si.edu/search/record/SILSRO_121020

Did you know:

- When a songbird sleeps on a perch, its claws automatically lock on to the perch.
 - One half of the bird species migrate
 - The Greeks surmised that birds hibernated, in cold weather, in mud and had no thought for migration
- Dean Paulsmeyer

The St. Johns Bayou and New Madrid Floodway Project Resurrected...Fight Continues

The Missouri Chapter of the Sierra Club and the National Wildlife Federation are again fighting to stop this levee project in the Missouri Bootheel, across from Cairo, IL.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is resurrecting the New Madrid Levee Project. This controversial project would build a 60-foot high, 1/4-mile long levee completely severing the Mississippi River from its floodplain in Missouri. This levee closure would impact 50,000 acres of wetlands causing devastating impacts to fish and wildlife while exposing communities to greater flood risk.

This project is virtually identical to an earlier proposal that was thrown out by the U.S. District Court, and should be vetoed under section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act. The project is opposed by The Environmental Protection Agency and the Missouri Dept. of Conservation because it will cause significant harm to fish and wildlife, harm that cannot be mitigated. This view is shared by many of the country's most distinguished river and wetland scientists.

The Southern Illinois Audubon Society joined with over 80 conservation and environmental groups, both state and national, from along the Mississippi River and beyond to sign a letter sent to President Obama asking him to stop the project.

From <http://ilovemountains.org> - In a huge victory for our water and our future, a federal appeals court recently stated the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are authorized to enforce laws on water pollution from mountain top removal mines.

After years of effective organizing, the ILoveMountains movement pressured the EPA to issue a water quality guidance in 2011 that used peer-reviewed science to show the devastating impacts that mountaintop removal coal mining has on Appalachia's water. Then a coalition including the National Mining Association and the state governments of Kentucky and West Virginia sued to prevent the EPA from protecting our water from dangerous coal pollution.

This important ruling says that the EPA was correct to enforce the law and follow the science to protect Appalachian waters and community health.

EPA and independent scientists have documented that waters downstream of mountaintop removal are harmed by extremely high levels of conductivity pollution from these mining operations, with many important species entirely missing from streams. Mining pollution deprives Appalachian communities of the clean water that most Americans take for granted. Now is the time to make these protections legally binding and permanent, so that the EPA can fulfill its mission to protect streams and communities.

Newsletter contributions welcome,
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SIAS continues to collect canceled stamps for the Illinois Audubon Society Land Conservation fund. Bring your stamps to any SIAS meeting and give them to Rhonda R.



For details on this IAS project visit their website.
www.illinoisaudubon.org/
There, click on
Land Conservation
then click on
Stamps for Wildlife Habitat

New SIAS Members! We'd like to welcome new members Lisa E. Wideman of Collinsville and Kirsten Trimble of Carbondale. If you recently joined but have not been acknowledged, please pardon our oversight.



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

