



Southern Illinois Audubon Society

January 2016 – Vol. 23, No. 1

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

NEWSLETTER

Established in 1970

The Everglades Restoration Plan

In 2000, congress passed the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, a 30 year, \$7.8 billion effort to capture fresh water that now flows unused to the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico and redirect it back to the wetland ecosystems of the Everglades. The plan calls upon a panel of experts to measure the success of these efforts every two years. Dr. Loretta Battaglia was one of the experts chosen by the National Research Council to serve on the panel that measured the progress and developed the fifth biennial report. **Dr. Battaglia will present on the Everglades Restoration Plan for SIAS on Friday, Jan. 29th, at 7:45 p.m. at the Fellowship Hall of the First United Methodist Church, 214 W. Main St., Carbondale. The Fellowship Hall is on the lower level of the church. Take the elevator or stairway down to the Hall.**

Dr. Battaglia is a professor in plant biology at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, with a focus on wetland ecology. She is interested in the dynamics of wetland plant communities and the ecological processes that link them with the surrounding landscape. Specifically, research in Dr. Battaglia's lab focuses on the effects of climate change and large-scale phenomena, such as exotic species invasions, on community structure and function, as well as development of restoration targets for coastal wetlands undergoing rapid climate change.

This January meeting is our annual meeting. The evening will begin with a potluck dinner followed by a short business meeting and elections of officers. 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.

The slate of officers to be elected/reelected are: Conservation/Education Chair – Cathie Hutcheson, Finance Chair – Greg Kupiec, and Outing Chair – Don Mullison. Nominations for positions can also be made the evening of the meeting as well.

SIAS will hold a silent auction and a drawing for door prize(s) 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. Folks giving auction items are asked to suggest a value at which to start the bidding. And more donated books will be available for purchase.



In Memoriam

With regret we report the recent passing of two cherished SIAS members.

Jerry O'Malley, 82, died on Sept. 29, 2015, in Carbondale. He had served on the board for several years in the 1990s but was most happy to be among the grillers at our annual picnics. Jerry was a retired publications editor and a close companion to Laraine Wright.

Dr. David Rendleman, 86, died on Dec. 25, 2015, in Carbondale. He had served as chief of surgery at Memorial Hospital and as a professor of the SIU School of Medicine. Our condolences to his wife, Mary, to whom he had been married for 61 years.

Flooding Cancels Annual Eagle Survey in Alexander & Union Co.

2016 was to mark the end of the 30+ Mid-Winter Eagle survey in Illinois but local historic flooding in December will keep the survey from it's final run in Alexander and Union Counties. With the failure of the Len Small Levee in Alexander County and associated flooding, it would be both impossible to run the Alexander Co. levee and Horseshoe Lake survey routes. Union County levees and some interior roads in the Union County Refuge are likewise closed to public access so not surveyable.

The IL Audubon Society (IAS) has coordinated the Midwinter Eagle Survey in its latter years, taking it over from the state. Because of various changes in some routes, included the terminating of access to some levees and other areas, it's possible the program will be re-evaluated for new routes and a new series of data collecting. If this occurs, SIAS has plans to continue assisting IAS in these efforts.

In 1851, Charles S. Ellet Jr., a civil engineer, wrote in a report to congress. "Don't build levees along the Mississippi." Building levees, Ellet warned, would constrict the river and actually increase the height of flood levels, and it would encourage farming and development along a natural flood plain that no number of levees and dams could ever fully protect.

Upcoming Events & Outings

SIAS Meetings Calendar for 2016

- Feb. 26th:** Program to be announced
March 25th: Tom Ulrich
April 22nd: Program to be announced
May: SIAS Picnic-date to be announced
Sept. 23rd: Mark Glenshaw - The Owls of Forest Park

Jan. 30 & 31 > CONWR Eagle Tours

This is the Crab Orchard NW Refuge annual bald eagle tours. On Saturday tours run at 8 & 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. On Sunday tours run at 9 & 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Seating is limited and reservations are required. Tickets are \$5 for adults and \$2.50 for children. Call the Refuge Visitors Center at 618.998.5933 to sign up.

Feb.-April > Movie Nights at the Cache

Bring your family and friends for a relaxing evening of nature movie watching on the 1st Thursday of each month. Feb. 4th: *Is That Skunk?*; March 3rd: *The Secret World of Bats*; April 7th: *Venom: Nature's Killer*.

Movie Nights are held at the Cache River Wetland Center from 6-8 p.m. and are free of charge. For more details, call Cypress Creek Refuge at 618.634.2231

Feb. 4 > SNF Camel Rock Quarter Launch

The Shawnee National Forest, specifically Camel Rock, will be featured on the 31st edition of the U.S. Mint's "America the Beautiful" commemorative quarter series. A coin launch will be held at Southeastern IL College, Harrisburg, at 10 a.m. And a coin forum, hosted by the U.S. Mint, will be held from 5-6 p.m. the evening before (02/03) at the Shawnee NF Headquarters in Harrisburg. For more details visit: usmint.gov/events

Feb. 6 > Annual Kaskaskia River Eagle Fest

This eagle fest is held at the Kaskaskia River Recreation Area, 4800 Lock and Dam Rd., Modoc, IL. The event runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Activities at the event are highlighted by programs by the World Bird Sanctuary. Other activities include a tent where kids can make eagle crafts and go home with an eagle souvenir, short interpreted walks both upstream and downstream from the dam, and eagle watching with spotting scopes. A warming tent features hot sandwiches and warm beverages, too! A suggested donation of \$5/person is asked to cover lunch expenses. This event is primarily sponsored by the HeartLands Conservancy and hosted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with help from the Lower Kaskaskia Stakeholders, Inc., U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, IL Department of Natural Resources, Southwestern IL College, Kaskaskia Regional Port District, Chester Tourism Committee, and CLIFFTOP. For more details, phone 618.284.7160 or visit: <http://www.greatriverroad.com/stegen/randattract/eagletrek.htm#sthash.hNVStUy5.dpuf>

SIAS will offer carpooling to the Eagle Fest. Meet at 8 a.m. at the northwest end of the Murphysboro Walmart parking lot (between Carbondale & Murphysboro, at the intersection of IL Rt. 13 and Country Club Rd.) Bring your lunch and refreshments. Carpool participants will return by 4 p.m.

Feb. 6 > Cache Frog & Toad Survey Orientation

Calling all volunteers to help conduct surveys of the frogs and toads of southern IL during their different breeding seasons. No special skills needed. Learn the protocol for conducting the surveys. Meet at the Cache River Wetland Center at 1 p.m. For details, call the Center at 618.657.2064.

Feb. 12-15 > The Great backyard Bird Count

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society invite you to participate in the annual Great Backyard Bird Count. In 1998, the Great Backyard Bird Count became the first online citizen-science project to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real-time.

Simply tally the numbers and kinds of birds you see for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count. You can count from any location, anywhere in the world! If you're new to the count, visit Cornell's website at the following link, where you can view a slideshow explaining, how to take part. http://gbbc.birdcount.org/2016_slide_show/ Then register online then enter your checklist. If you have already participated in another Cornell Lab citizen-science project, you can use your existing login. Visit <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/> for details.

Feb. 20 > Riverwork in Southern Illinois Film Screening at the Cache River Wetland Center

View the *Riverwork in Southern Illinois* documentary that depicts the changing nature of human interaction with the Cache and other regional rivers, from the time of Native Americans thru the devastating flood on 1993. Producer Kay Rippelmeyer-Tippy will be present at the screening and available for questions. For more info, call the Wetland Center at 618.657.2064.

April 1-3 > So. IL Indigenous Plants Symposium

More info, including registration details to follow.

28th Trinidad & Tobago Adventure June 3-1, 2016

Experience a tropical evergreen rain forest, a mangrove, tide pools, a tropical deciduous forest, and stay at the 200-acre, world-renowned Asa Wright Nature Centre and Lodge. Land Cost: \$1595 (with 8 participants, includes all meals,



lodging, and fieldtrips with local naturalist guides).

For details, contact:
Nelda W. Hinckley at
618.549.5588 or
neldahinckley@jalc.edu

SIAS Treasurer's Report for 2015

Reporting to members about the status of our group's finances remains the happiest thing I do each year as SIAS treasurer. Thanks to you, we remain a strong organization, able to pay our regular expenses through our membership dues alone. However, for many years we also have donated to other worthwhile groups because of your extra generosity to us. Our members are proud to help support local conservation efforts

We closed 2015 with cash assets of \$6,810, of which \$761 is earmarked for the annual spring Birding Blitz event we sponsor. (Through this year, the Blitz has been a fund-raiser for the Friends of Cache River, specifically for conservation and restoration projects. However, in 2016 the Blitz will be a purely fun event for birders from around the state because funds raised in previous years have yet to be spent.)

SIAS income for 2015 was \$2,425, of which \$1,100 came from basic membership dues. SIAS expenses were \$3,311. We still have money from donations in memory of Ben Gelman, Esther Edelman, and Susie Utgaard which enabled us to spend more this year than we received in income.

As approved by the SIAS board, we sent \$1,535 to other organizations last year:

-\$550, Friends of Cache River (\$400 as our pledge through the Birding Blitz and \$150 to support the Kids to the Cache educational project)

-\$500, Free Again (animal rehabber Beverly Shofstall of rural Carterville)

-\$250, SIUC's Touch of Nature to support its environmental education program, especially aimed at outdoor youth trail activities.

-\$100, Illinois Audubon Society, for its Land Acquisition revolving fund.

-\$100, First United Methodist Church of Carbondale, as a thank you for giving us meeting space throughout the year.

-\$35, Carbondale Public Library, our annual sponsorship of "Audubon" magazine.

Other expenses for 2015 included \$204 toward the upkeep of the Crab Orchard NWR bluebird trail; \$288 to purchase SIAS caps for resale; \$430 to produce the newsletter; \$180 to purchase our new projection screen for programs; and \$250 for speaker fees.

In 2015 we received \$480 in cash donations. Thank you very much to the following donors to SIAS as well as those who contributed in so many other ways, including gifts-in-kind for raffles and resale at meetings:

Clark Ashby, Valerie Blakely, Mike Brown, Lily Crane, Linda Dutcher, Mary Luh Fraunfelder, Sylvia Greenfield, Kathy Harasimowicz, Nelda Hinckley, Greg Kupiec, David Kvernes, Richard and Cindy LaSalle, Brenda Mayberry, Clara McClure, Joe Merkelbach, Frances Oros, David and Mary Rendleman, Rhonda and Robert Rothrock

If you have a suggestion about organizations or projects that could use money from SIAS, please contact any board member (listed on the back of this newsletter). We also always welcome your donations of books, artwork, or any other items that can be raffled at meetings or resold at relatively modest prices (but nevertheless as an important source of revenue to SIAS).

— Lorraine Wright



Seeing Birds...

SIAS Outings Chair Don Mullison wants folks to know that he regularly goes out birding and welcomes members to join him. If you'd like to go out birding, give Don a call at 618.203.2869.

Just in, a Black-tailed Gull was seen at Carlyle Lake on 01/11, near the marina boat launch area. For details, check the Illinois Birders' Forum at <http://www.ilbirds.com> Black-tailed Gulls are residents of East Asia and vagrants to Alaska and northeastern North America. They are slightly smaller than Ring-billed Gulls with a black band on their tail.

The 2015-16 Christmas Bird Count season was one to remember. It started out with above average temperatures throughout the state resulting in low waterfowl numbers. Then, oh the dreadful wind and rain. Wind and rain do not make for good birding. With the exception of waterfowl, birds just aren't very active on windy or rainy days. Had the rain arrived just a few days earlier, the Alexander County CBC might not have occurred.

Still, there were some unexpected species located including a Red-throated Loon at Crab Orchard NWR, American White Pelican at Mermet Lake, and both a Western Meadowlark and an Orange-crowned Warbler in Jackson Co. More CBC results will follow in the February newsletter.



Recent News from Scientific Journals

Soaring Vultures

An article in "The Auk" reports on a Virginia observational study of turkey and black vultures and how they stay easily aloft on non-thermal days. Called "contorted soaring," the vultures take advantage of air turbulence at forest edges. "Turbulence is formed when horizontal air currents hit a barrier, like a tree line, creating the uplift that supports the vulture," says "The New York Times" (Dec. 28, 2015).

The vultures glide up for a while without flapping. Their flight resembles a roller coaster ride, say the observers. But it helps them stay airborne without a lot of effort and gives them longer time to locate carrion.

Red-headed Woodpeckers

This beautiful, valued species is in critical decline throughout its whole range, a downturn that dates back 40 years. Unfortunately, little research has been conducted on these woodpeckers, a situation that some state agencies are now trying to change.

Recent observations note that the red-headed is a weak excavator, so it primarily relies on soft, dead wood, be it a whole tree or a snag on a live tree. Landowners and managers should keep both types of potential nest sites on their properties. Also needed is the conservation of live trees with existing nesting holes. This practice is encouraged in the selection of trees to be harvested in a woodlot. (If only Ameren and Egyptian Electric paid attention to this! My advice: bring it to the attention of

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

Individual Member \$15
Family \$25
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I/We would like to received our newsletter via email: YES / NO

Mail to:

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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. If you receive your newsletter electronically, contact Laraine W. or Rhonda R. to check your dues status.

A Big Thank You to the Anton & David K.

On every New Year's Day since 1997, a group of SIAS members & friends spread out thru an area of Jackson County for the Christmas Bird Count. Over the years, the participants met at the end of the day at various locations to compile our tallies. Then some 10+(?) years ago, David Kvernes opened his home to us for compilation. We began with somewhat of a potluck. Anton, David's son, made soup. Anton's soups are now legendary and the highlight of count day. Anton's delicious soups (and David's hot apple cider) warm our bodies and souls. Words cannot express the gratitude participants feel for the wonderful hospitality shown to us each year by David and Anton. Thank you both so very very much! -Rhonda R.

Welcome New Members: Chelsea DeVivo of Herrin and Kathy Harasimowicz of Carbondale. If you are a new member and were not formally welcomed, we beg your pardon.

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

