



Southern Illinois Audubon Society

November/December 2016 – Vol. 23, No. 8

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

NEWSLETTER

Established in 1970

We'll be back at the Carbondale Township for Nov./Dec. SIAS meeting! Our evening's speaker will be

Steve Holman who will give a program on Climate Change: Vital Signs of a Globe in Crisis.

Our meeting and program will start at 7 p.m. at Carbondale Township Hall, 217 E. Main St., Carbondale. Adequate parking space is now available off Monroe Street, behind the Township Hall.

Steve Holman, a Southern Illinois University alum, is a marine biologist and climate change educator, speaking on topics of climate change and shark conservation across the U.S for the past 16 years. His research has included ocean biome monitoring in the Biosphere 2 Center, Inc., ocean acidification throughout the Caribbean, and coral reef and mangrove habitat preservation in Tonga and Fiji. Mr. Holman currently serves as the Dean of Math & Sciences at Southwestern Illinois College and also, the Publications Librarian and Chair of the Publication Fund Committee of the American Elasmobranch Society.

The 2017 SIAS Meetings Calendar details

were not available at this printing but our amazing Vice President and Programs Chair Vicki Lang-Mendenhall already has several interesting programs lined up. Many thanks to Vicki for her continued hard work and creativity!

January 27th: Annual meeting potluck, program & silent auction.
Speaker to be announced.

February 24th: Speaker to be announced.

March 24th: Speaker to be announced.

April 29th: Speaker to be announced.

May: Annual spring picnic.

SIAS is Looking for a Hospitality Chair

The SIAS Hospitality Chair position is currently vacant. The responsibilities include arriving an hour before the scheduled meeting time to prepare coffee and set out refreshments. Other board members assist with this prep work so it doesn't fall solely on the hospitality chair. This person also participates in the monthly SIAS board meetings held an the hour prior to programs.

If you interested or would like more details, please ask any board member on meeting night sor contact one of us any time. Contact info is at the end of this newsletter.

*The current slate of officers to be elected/reelected in 2017 are:
President: Joe Merkelbach; Vicki President: Vicki Lang-Mendenhall;
Secretary: Mary McCarthy; Treasurer: Laraine Wright; and
Membership Chair: Rhonda Rothrock.*

Wanted: Mid-Winter Eagle Survey Coordinator for Alexander County

The 2015 winter flooding caused the cancelation of the 2016 Annual Mid-Winter Eagle Survey. This was to be the last survey in the multi-decade study.

The Illinois Audubon Society (IAS), state survey coordinator, has notified all county coordinators that the survey will now likely be extended to January 2022. For certain it will be conducted in January 2017, with the target dates being January 13th or 14th.

I (Rhonda R.) have been coordinating the Alexander County route for over 20 years but am now ready to pass the responsibility on to another. If you've participated in the past, you know the job is easy. Simply drive the specified route through Alexander County on the specified day, documenting all the eagles you locate. You then fill out a simple document provided by IAS and return it to them.

If you are interested in taking on this little project, please either phone or email me. I will connect you with the Jo Fessett, the IAS coordinator. Phone me at 618.684.6605 or email me at woodthrusheola@hotmail.com –Rhonda R.

October Program Highlights

A large crowd came to be part of Cathie Hutcheson's trip through Chile, SIAS's October program. It was both magical and informative. With the Pacific Ocean to its west the and mountains to its east, Chile has an extremely long north-south length of approximately 2,672 miles, but its average width is less than 112 miles, and nowhere is it more than 221 miles wide.

Cathie had images of bird residents from the north end of Chile to the south. Nearly from A-Z, the birds she saw included cinnamon teal, neotropic cormorant, vermilion flycatcher and multiple songbirds with names like tyrant, tanager, and ground-dove. Cathie had also photographed some of Chile's prehistoric art: The Giants of Atacama at Cero Unitas. These are giant works of art placed on or worked into the landscape of a hillside, one, the Gigante de Atacama. stretches over 390 feet and is visible from Google Earth maps. Many thanks to Cathie for sharing her trip with us. –Rhonda R.

SIAS Receives Another Lot of Birding Related Books

Ms. Maryweather Wilson has donated to SIAS her recently deceased mother's collection of bird books and field guides. This collection includes guides from all over the world as well as field guides and reference books on North American birds. Vicki Lang-Mendenhall was contacted by Ms. Wilson and coordinated with Cathie Hutcheson to pick up the collection in Mt. Vernon where Ms. Wilson's mother had lived. These books will be made available for purchase by cash donation at future SIAS meetings.



Upcoming Events & Activities

Nov. 30 > Native Landscaping Goes to School

Julie Wittenborn-Sikorski will speak on this multi-school garden collaboration. Hear how Julie, Meteicha Green, and Cindy Hepp have incorporated native plant gardens into their science curriculum. This presentation, sponsored by the Tupelo Chapter of Wild Ones Native Landscapers will be held at the Carbondale Township Hall. Park and access the hall from behind the building off Monroe Street. For more details contact Ruth Kelley at 618.684.2196.

SIAS recently donated toward such projects at Carruthers Elementary in Murphysboro, Marion Middle School, and Trico Elementary near Ava.

Dec. 1 > Pros, Cons of Fracking

Paul Philp, professor emeritus at the University of Oklahoma's School of Geology and Geophysics, will present "The Fracking Revolution in the Oil and Gas Business" at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 1, in room 240 at the Neckers Building, south of the Student Center, Lincoln Dr., SIU Campus, Carbondale. See article in this newsletter for more details.

Dec. 11 > Southern Illinois Alternate Gift Fair

The Alternative Gift Fair is an opportunity for gift shopping that supports local not-for-profit organizations. Unique gifts are available to purchase, including local art and jewelry, games, toys, gift memberships, and much more! Location: Carbondale Civic Center, 200 S. Illinois Ave., from 2-5 p.m. For more info phone 618.534.1162.

Jan. (?) – SIAS's Mid Winter Eagle Surveys

Details yet to be determined. For Union County date and details contact Cathie Hutcheson at 618.529.2022. Compiler wanted for Alexander County, contact Rhonda Rothrock at 618.684.6605 or email her at woodthrusheola@hotmail.com

January > Eco-Trek to Panama!

There's still time to sign up and join Professor Nelda Hinckley on this Central America adventure to learn about the Natural History of Panama, Jan. 5-13, 2017. Experience the Canopy Lodge where you'll awake to bird song, live among the birds at Canopy Tower, a repurposed radar tower, where you'll have a 360 degree view of the forest and a view of the Panama Canal. For complete details, including tour cost, contact Nelda at 618.549.7335 ext. 8820, 618.549.5588, or neldahinckley@jalc.edu



Dec. 14 - Jan. 5 > 116th Christmas Bird Count Season

All are welcome to participate in this the 116th year. Every citizen scientist who annually braves snow, wind, or rain to take part in a Christmas Bird Count makes an enormous contribution to conservation.

The Illinois Ornithological Society has just made locating an Illinois circle very easy by plotting them all out on a map that can be viewed at: their site: <http://www.illinoisbirds.org/> (Scroll down to New CBC Map.)

See the following list of local counts & compiler contact information.

Big Oak Tree St. Pk. (MO)- Dec. 15 - Meet on Count Day at 6:00 a.m. at the restaurant at Boomland, on the southeast corner of the interchange at the Charleston, MO, off I-57. Contact compiler Dr. Bill Eddleman at weddleman@semo.com.

Rend Lake- Dec. 17 - Advanced registration required, contact compiler Keith McMullen at 618.632.1057/warbler7@sbcglobal.net.

War Bluff Valley- Dec. 17 - For details contact Andrea Douglas, compiler at 618.564.2079 / anderatd@yahoo.com.

Baldwin Lake- Dec. 17 - For details check the IOS CBC map.

Grab Orchard NWR- Dec. 18 - Advanced registration required, contact compiler Vicki Lang-Mendenhall at 618.687.9868

Cypress Creek NWR- Dec. 19 - Meet for assignments at Shawnee Comm. College Bldg. D, Rustic Campus Drive, Ullin, at 6:00 a.m. For details, phone Cypress Creek NWR 618.634.2231.

Carlyle Lake- Dec. ? - Advanced registration required, contact compiler Dan Kassebaum at 618.233.5451/kdan@htc.net. Meet for assignments at the McDonald's near the Lake entrance at 6 a.m.

Middle Mississippi River NWR- Dec. 23 - Register ahead then meet at Middle Miss office, 1293 Rocky Hollow Road, Rockwood at 6:30 a.m. Contact compiler John Hartleb at 618.763.4420 or Rhonda Rothrock at 618.684.6605 or email woodthrusheola@hotmail.com

Arklands/Pyramid St. Pk. - Dec. 27 - Meet on site at the intersection of Pyatts Blacktop and Panda Bear Rd. at 6:00 a.m. Contact compiler Joe Merkelbach at 618.532.3112/jemerker@ecologyfund.net.

Horseshoe Lake (Alexander Co.)- Dec. 28 - Advanced registration required. Meet in parking lot at the intersection of Rt. 3 & Miller City Rd., Olive Branch, at 6:30 a.m. *6 p.m. compilation at the Wicker Club.* Free lodging at the Wicker Club for Tuesday and Wednesday nights. Space is limited with beds and mattresses available but bring bedding, pillows, personal items, etc. Contact compiler Vern Kleen at 217.787.3515 / vkleen@comcast.net.

Union County- Dec. 29 - Advance registration required. Meet at the SW corner of the intersection of IL Rt. 3 and IL Rt.124 (old gas station in Ware) at 6:30 a.m. *5 p.m. compilation at Anna McDonalds.* Contact compiler Vern Kleen at 217.787.3515 / vkleen@comcast.net.

Mermet Lake- Dec. 30 - Advance registration required. For assignments contact compiler Rhonda Rothrock at 618.684.6605 / woodthrusheola@hotmail.com.

Mingo (MO)- Dec. 31 - Contact compiler Dr. Bill Eddleman at weddleman@semo.com for details including meeting time and location.

Jackson County- Jan. 1 - Advance registration required. For assignments contact compiler Rhonda Rothrock at 618.684.6605 / woodthrusheola@hotmail.com. Compilation and soup (by Chef Anton) at sunset, at the home of David and Anton Kvernes, Skyline Dr., Carbondale. *Jackson County CBC feeder watchers wanted!! Email or snail mail your feeder bird list to Rhonda by Jan. 3rd.*

Marion County- Jan. 4 - Meet in the parking lot of the Raccoon School, just west of I-57 at the Centralia exit at 6:00 a.m. Contact compiler Joe Merkelbach at 618.532.3112/jemerker@ecologyfund.net.

Expert to Discuss Pros, Cons of Fracking *(Excerpts of article by Tim Crosby)*

Paul Philp, professor emeritus at the University of Oklahoma's School of Geology and Geophysics, will present "The Fracking Revolution in the Oil and Gas Business" at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 1, in room 240 at the Neckers Building, home of the College of Science, on the Campus of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. The program is free and open to the public.

Yuqing Hou, assistant scientist and associate director with the Cal Y. Meyers Institute for Interdisciplinary Research in Organic and Medicinal Chemistry at SIUC, says the combination of hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling has led to a dramatic increase in natural gas and oil production in the United States, which has in turn lead to an energy price drop.

Despite that trend, however, Hou said the practice of hydraulic fracturing – also known as “fracking” – is likely to remain prevalent for some time. Inviting Philp, an expert on such practices, to speak on the subject is an effort to share factual information with the public, Hou said.

“We are holding the seminar on campus, hoping to attract wide audiences, people who are concerned about the environmental impact of fracturing, including SIU faculty and students, as well as a general audience,” Hou said.

Philp plans to talk about a number controversial aspects of hydraulic fracturing in oil and gas exploration. “In my opinion, there are many aspects of this approach that are misunderstood by the general public and many scientists and experts in the area as well,” Philp said.

Philp said many people are concerned about ground water pollution, although the number of fresh water aquifers that have been polluted by such practices has been relatively few. Earthquakes in Oklahoma, as well as managing large amounts of formation water – water that is naturally present in oil and gas rock formations that needs to be disposed – are two such issues. The large quantities of fresh water needed to conduct hydraulic fracturing, which can lead to shortages, is another environmental concern, Philp said.

The Cal Y. Meyers Institute for Interdisciplinary Research in Organic and Medicinal Chemistry is funded by a \$2.5 million endowment plus a \$500,000 annuity trust set up with the SIU Foundation in March 2000. Its mission is to carry out basic research in an interdisciplinary fashion.

Arctic Outer Shell Safe From Drilling For Now

A huge “thank you” to President Obama for removing the Arctic from the 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program. Offshore drilling would have put the region at risk of an oil spill disaster, which would have been nearly impossible to clean up. By protecting the Arctic from drilling, President Obama has protected countless wildlife species and helped us move one step closer to a cleaner future, free of fossil fuels.

President-elect Climate Change Denier & His EPA Transition Team Leader M. Ebell

Throughout his campaign, President-elect Trump was consistent in his denial of climate change and in his promise to reduce environmental restrictions.

In his recent video, the President-elect Trump says he will “cancel job-killing restrictions on the production of American energy, including shale energy and clean coal” and create “many millions of high-paying jobs.” One of his prime targets is President Obama’s Clean Power Plan, which critics refer to as the “war on coal”. The plan targets existing coal-fired and natural gas power plants in an effort to reduce greenhouse emissions in the U.S. by as much as 32% by 2030. It is expected to go before the Supreme Court in early 2017. The President-elect has also promised to “cancel” the historic Paris climate agreement.

President-elect Trump seems to be well on the way to fulfilling his campaign promises by choosing Myron Ebell as his Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) transition team leader. Mr. Ebell is a renowned climate change denier and ally to companies with long histories of pollution.

The EPA plays a vital role in protecting the air we breathe, the water we drink and the climate on which we rely. Mr. Ebell, however, denies the science of climate change and opposes policies to protect clean air and water. He has a history of supporting policies that protect polluter profits over public health. He directs the Center for Energy and Environment at the Competitive Enterprise Institute, which received donations from polluters like Exxon and Murray Energy.

-information gleaned from Nov. 2016 CNN & Huffington Post articles.

State Bill HR1269 – ATVS in the Shawnee

Illinois House Representative Brandon Phelps recently put thru a bill urging the United States Forest Service (USFS) to allow the use of all-terrain vehicles in Shawnee National Forest. It also urges the USFS to expand the existing system of horse trails and explore additional ways to allow greater recreational use of Shawnee National Forest.

Among the many things Rep. Phelps doesn't seem to realize is the fact that the Shawnee's erodible soils could not withstand ATV use or increased equestrian traffic. -RR

Saving Habitat Saves Species: 14 Top Scientists Call for a National Habitat Conservation System

More than 300 million acres of public land in the United States are protected—a mix of national parks, refuges, and wilderness areas that equals more than 13 percent of all land in the 50 states and U.S. territories. Despite those protections and past conservation successes, studies show the loss of habitats and biodiversity is accelerating, and climate change is expected to contribute further to the decline. Added to that is a contentious political climate that has put management of public lands in a tug-of-war between diametrically opposing viewpoints. “Our protected lands system is unparalleled in the world in that it safeguards so much of our landscape and species for all Americans to enjoy,” says Cornell Lab conservation scientist Ken Rosenberg. “But it's also a system that is increasingly under threat. There's a big gap between those who want to remove protections and those who want to expand and improve the system.”

Top conservation leaders and scientists have joined forces in a report that calls for the national habitat conservation system to safeguard our beautiful landscapes and the creatures who live there. The report singles out three models for developing a successful national habitat conservation system: The North American Bird Conservation Initiative in the United States, Natura 2000 in Europe, and the National Reserve System in Australia. What they have in common is a commitment to working with partners at all levels and with varying viewpoints, from local to federal, both private and governmental—the key to success for large-scale protection of lands. For the complete report details, visit:

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/saving-habitat-saves-species-14-top-scientists-call-for-a-national-habitat-conservation-system/>

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

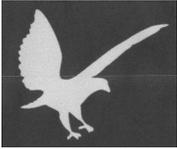
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 If you receive your newsletter electronically,
 Contact Laraine W. or Rhonda R. to check your dues status.
 (Annual membership renewal month is January.)



Hawk Identification Game: Test your knowledge and ability to identify North American raptors! Visit: <http://idhawks.com/>

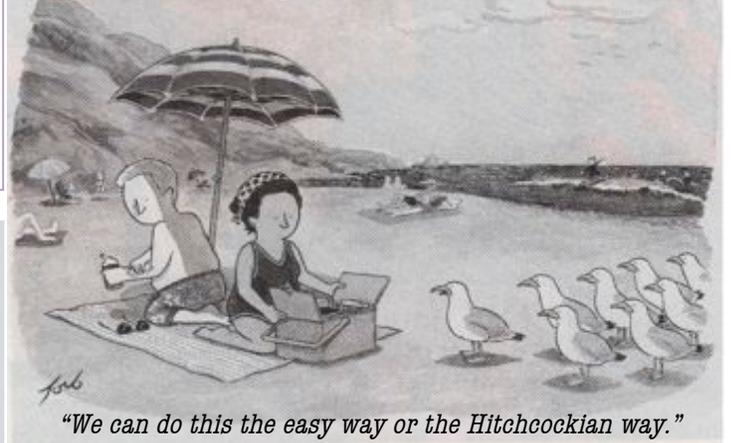
When viewed at distances, raptors can be a mystery to both beginner and well-seasoned birders. If viewing a mixed group, First, break them down into groups: buteos, accipiters, & other big black birds. Then you can start picking out the finer details, like size and flight style.



Time for renewing dues is drawing near

Please check your mailing address label to view your current dues "paid to" date. We encourage members to renew at the first of each new year. Those of you receiving an electronic version of the newsletter via email, please verify your paid-to date with SAIS Treasurer Laraine Wright. Laraine's contact info is below.

We thank everyone for your continued membership and support.



SIAS Board of Directors

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



Georgette, Paulette, Ringo, & John: Kaskaskia's Fab Four