



Southern Illinois Audubon Society

NEWSLETTER

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

January 2019 - Vol. 26 No. 1

Established in 1970

- The Bees' Needs - Mark Fletter from Dayempur Farm will give a presentation on honey bees for SIAS on Friday, Jan. 25th, at 7:00 p.m. in the Parlor of the First United Methodist Church, 214 W. Main St., Carbondale.

Mark has been leading the beekeeping program at Dayempur Farm's Center for Sustainable Living in Union County for the past 10 years. With a strict commitment to sustainable and natural practices, he has found that locally adapted honey bees require less maintenance and human intervention than commercially



raised bees. In his brief presentation, Mark will explore the inherent strength of this incredible organism and what it has been battling for the

past century. He will share some of the detrimental, yet commonly used beekeeping methods that have led to the challenges of the modern honey bee and illustrate that perhaps a "save the bees" campaign is not as needed as a "do no harm" approach.

This will be our annual January meeting event beginning with a potluck dinner followed by a short business meeting and elections of officers. **Note: earlier potluck set-up time of 5:45 p.m. with earlier potluck starting time of 6:15 p.m.** SIAS will provide the main course and some beverages. Please bring an entree to share and your own dinnerware and utensils.

The slate of officers to be elected/re-elected are: President: Joe Merkelbach; Vice President: Vicki Lang-Mendenhall; Secretary: Mary McCarthy; Treasurer: Laraine Wright; Hospitality Chair: Phyllis Beck; and Membership Chair: Rhonda Rothrock. And the Outings Chair position is now open and in need of filling. SIAS thanks Don Mullison for his service in that position. Nominations for positions can be made in advance to any SIAS Board member or the evening of the meeting as well.

SIAS will again hold a silent auction and possibly 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 as a starting bid price. And there are still books available for sale.

Protected by Cranes

SIAS members and supporters Jan Sundberg and Lyle White, presented a program about their participation in citizen science in Nebraska to the December meeting. They had visited the National Audubon Society refuge at the gathering location for many of the sandhill cranes of North America. During their visit they met and became friends with the director.

One of the important side benefits of highlighting the preservation of charismatic megafauna, like the magnificent flocks of sandhill cranes, is the benefit of saving habitat for other species. The grassland and shrub land species that live in the lands of the refuge are major beneficiaries of the habitat restoration and preservation.

The director was looking for help in assessing the populations of birds living on and using the refuge when the cranes are not present. Since Lyle and Jan had established themselves as reliable and valued volunteers they were asked, as pretty good birders, to help with the program.

The plan was to follow the protocol for the population study and at the same time for Jan to get good images of the resident birds. They were able to accomplish this goal but there were some complications in getting the job done. One thing that any census worker learns very quickly is that audible cues are actually more important than sightings in assessments. So they learned the calls of the target species; some readily identified, and some not so easily determined.

The protocol for the study used GPS points and satellite maps to traverse study plots in a grid pattern and count the number of target species detected. Then a calculation parameter was applied to estimate populations of the various species.

Some good images of birds and a better understanding of bird censusing resulted from the volunteer effort. We thank Jan and Lyle for their informative program and for their efforts in behalf of the Audubon sandhill crane sanctuary. *-Joe Merkelbach, President*

A Big THANK YOU to All Federal Employees

As of this writing, the U.S.A. is in a federal government partial shutdown directly affecting some of our members, our friends, and our neighbors.

Federal employees please know that you are in everyone's thoughts as this shutdown crisis continues. You and your efforts are greatly appreciated. Here's hoping that by the time you receive this, clearer heads will have prevailed and you will all be back at work. *-Rhonda R.*

SIAS Winter to Spring Meeting Calendar

- February 22nd** - Judy Groskind: the Pollinator Garden at Crab Orchard NWR
- March 22nd** - To Be Announced **April 26th** - To Be Announced
- May** - SIAS picnic; date and location to be announced

Welcome New Members:

- Welcome Jyothi & Michael Wainer of Carbondale and Kimberly & Kevin Rohling of Marion.
- If you are a new member but were never formally welcomed, please forgive our oversight.*

2018 Treasurer's Report

We closed the year with a balance of \$3,595.81 in checking and shares and a CD worth \$4,799.28, all at the SIU Credit Union, for a total of \$8,395.09. Of this, \$7,745.19 is available for SIAS and \$649.90 for the spring Birding Blitz, which remains our fund-raiser for improvements of the Cache River watershed.

Our SIAS non-Blitz income for 2018 was \$2,913, which included \$1,420 in membership dues, \$690 in membership donations, and \$650 in memorial donations:

Memorial for Mary Rendleman: Amy and David Baue, Mary Brigham, Lawrence and Maureen Dennis, Homer and Amber Hanson, Larry and Sue Harrison, James and Cynthia Weller, Peggy Williams, and Laraine Wright

Memorial for Bob Drennen: Nelda Hinckley

Memorial for Conrad Hinckley: Mary Dresser

We also thank the following members who contributed extra money in joining SIAS or in renewing their memberships, for a total of \$690: Clark Ashby, Phyllis Beck, Chris Benda, Lilly Crane, Vickie Devenport, Bob Drennen, Denny and Esther Hays, Karen Kaufman, Greg Kupiec, Richard and Cindy LaSalle, Brenda Mayberry, Mike McNerney, Mary Rendleman, Parviz Sanjabi, Mark Seiffert, Kirsten Trimble, Terry Tim Werner, John Van Dyk, and Lyle White.

Finally, we are grateful to everyone for their purchases of merchandise and books, their delicious food at our potlucks and meetings, and their books, feeders, art, puzzles, and other items for our annual silent auction (coming up again, on Jan. 25).

As for 2018 expenses, they amounted to \$1,196.37, primarily for our newsletter, affiliate dues, and program and picnic costs.

We also gave \$2,035 to other organizations and individuals, which continues our long tradition of support for local and regional conservation efforts:

\$1,000 to Free Again Inc., \$300 to the Illinois Audubon Society, \$300 to the three local elementary teachers who have established pollinator gardens (we gave them a like amount in 2017, too), \$100 to the North American Bluebird Society, \$100 to First United Methodist Church (a thank you for our free meeting space), \$100 to SIUC Touch of Nature to purchase a brick in honor of recreation specialist Vicki Lang Mendenhall, \$100 to the Friends of Crab Orchard Refuge to support its demonstration pollinator garden, and \$35 to the Carbondale Public Library for a subscription to "Audubon" magazine.

In her Dec. 20 thank you note for our latest check, Free Again's Beverly Shofstall writes, "Multiple orphaned raptors are eating mice at an expense of \$30 a day. Of course, several birds of prey with new injuries have arrived recently. Released many of this year's babies!"

We have money available for other conservation and environmental education projects, and the board wants to step up our efforts to do just that. Please send me an email or call me if you can suggest ways we can help other groups. The SIAS board votes on how we spend our income and the memorial donations we receive. — *Laraine Wright, Treasurer*

Coordinated Misdirection

Nest predation has driven the evolution of specialized behaviors that decrease the probability that a predator encounters a nest. A scientist recently published an interesting article describing a widespread bird behavior "wherein male and female adults fly to their nest as a pair, with one bird flying onward or veering off while the other enters the nest." He calls this behavior "coordinated misdirection" because it depends on the cooperation of at least 2 birds and it's presumed function is a visual misdirection—a ruse to draw the observers' attention away from the nest. In addition, he states evidence shows that it has evolved over and over in Neotropical birds.

Read the full article at: <http://www.wjonline.org/doi/abs/10.1676/17-047.1?code=wors-site>

Upcoming Events & Activities

Jan. 20 > Super Moon & Total Lunar Eclipse

A total lunar eclipse will appear overnight from Sunday, 01/20, to Monday, 01/21, and the potentially copper-colored moon — dubbed a "blood moon" — will be visible from all of North and South America. The eclipse will be starting at 9:30 p.m. with totality at 10:30 p.m.

Feb. 6 > Intro to Maple Syrup at GCSP

Chris Evans, UofI Extension Forester, will cover the basics of maple syrup production, from tree identification and equipment needs to tree tapping, sap collection and finished syrup. The program is from 6-7 p.m. at the Giant City St. Pk. Visitors Center, Giant City Rd., Makanda. For details, phone 618.457.4836.

Feb. 9 > Frogs of Southernmost IL

Join John Palis at the Giant City St. Pk. Visitors Center to learn to identify frogs by sight and sound. John will also share info on frog surveys he's conducting in southernmost IL. The program is from 1-2 p.m. For details, phone 618.457.4836.

Feb. 14 > Movie Night at the Cache

Join the folks at the Cache River Wetlands Center, 8885 State Rt. 37 S, Cypress, for the 2nd of their monthly Movie Night features. They'll be screen an episode from PBS's NOVA series, "Ants: Little creatures who run the world." Bring your favorite lovebug and spend Valentine's Day learning about these incredible insects.

Starting this year there will be the option of viewing either a 3-4 p.m. matinee or a 6-7 p.m. evening screening. For more info, call the Wetlands Center at 618.657.2064

And mark your calendar for future movie nights:
Mar. 14: Hotel Armadillo & April 11: Flight School

Feb. 16 > A Naturalist Visit to Newfoundland and the Gaspé Peninsula

Naturalist John Schwegman will give a presentation covering a trip taken to the west coast of the Island of Newfoundland and the Gaspé Peninsula in Canada. The program will traverse coastal tundra and limestone barrens in search of rare orchids and nesting colonial seabirds like northern gannets, common murrelets, and razorbills. The program is from 10-11 a.m. at the Cache River Wetlands Center. For details, phone 618.657.2064.

Mar. 2 > Birding Basics with Dr. Waring

Curious about birding but not sure where to start? Dr. George Waring, Zoology Professor Emeritus, SIUC, will share the ABCs of birding at Giant City St. Pk. Visitors Center. Dr. Waring will discuss native and migrating birds, share easy ID tips, and common bird calls. The program is from 1-2 p.m. For details, phone 618.457.4836.



Seeing Birds Seems that sandhill cranes are already on the move north to their breeding grounds. I base this on two separate reports out of Massac County. The 1st was from

Metropolis resident Anne Parmley who reported seeing a flock of 45 sandhill cranes flying over her home heading north on 01/05. The 2nd came from Frank Bennett of New Columbia (north of Metropolis) who reported seeing 2 flocks of sandhills fly over his home heading north on 01/06. One was a group of 50 birds, the other group totaled 35 birds.

> The words Big Year might be unfamiliar unless you maybe read the book *The Big Year: A Tale of Man, Nature, and Fowl Obsession* (based on a true story) or saw the wonderfully charming movie based on that book. To answer any questions, a Big Year is a type of competition for birders who attempt to see (&/or hear) as many species in one calendar year as physically possible. Many versions of a Big Year exist, mostly depending on the amount of land one decides they can survey in that year...a county, a state, a country, or the world! The birders in the book chose North America as their territory. As of this writing, I don't know who currently holds the big year record but it's over the 745 total achieved by Sandy Komito, the top birder in the book.

The reason I brought this up is because a SIASer is attempting a Big Year. Henry Detwiler began 2019 on a "60th birthday "Big Year" quest. He states his Big Year will be limited to the continental U.S. and Alaska, with a goal of 660 species. Henry started on 01/01 with a visit to the Salton Sea NW Refuge and has since birded in California, Texas, and southernmost IL. Let's wish Henry safe and successful birding!

> It was always my intention to share Christmas Bird Count (CBC) results as Ben Gelman did but I've fallen short on that. The number of counts has increased since Ben's day making it more challenging to keep up with reporting the results. This year I will, share some highlights, but due to space, must keep the details brief.

Rend Lake is always the first CBC of the season. Sorry that I do not have the total species count for the day but can attest that Rend Lake was absent its average high numbers and diversity of ducks. Cypress Creek NW Refuge CBC followed two days later. A common yellow-throat was reported there. Next was Crab Orchard NW Refuge and it was allowed to go forward even though the partial government shutdown had begun. The day's total tally was 94 species. Crab Orchard would turn out to be one of the big waterfowl counts of the area with 4 species of geese and 17 species of ducks. Sadly, the brown pelican was no longer present. Next up was the Arklands/Pyramid CBC. The weather was wet and windy and waterfowl numbers were low. So it was a pleasant surprise when Kelly McKay reported 2 golden eagles and a red-throated loon! The next day the Horseshoe Lake (Alexander Co.) count also experienced a lack of ducks and only a few Canada geese. Snow geese were present but also low in numbers. Rusty blackbirds outnumbered all the other

backbird species. Tally for the day was 89. The following day's Union Co. CBC counters found 23 species of waterfowl and totaled 103 species.

Next was the Middle Miss CBC. This circle is split almost evenly between IL and MO. Not all the data has been turned in so the day's total is unavailable. Highlights included lots of white-throated sparrows on the MO side and a short-eared owl on the IL side. The Mermet Lake count, held on New Year's eve, was an icky, rainy day and tallied a near record low of 78 species. But Jeff Smith found a white-winged scoter on Mermet Lake! New Year's day offered much better birding weather for the Jackson County CBC. The count total was 82. A special find was 3 common yellow-throats located by Kelly McKay and Ted Wolff at Oakwood Bottoms. Cathie Hutcheson viewed a flock of over 27,000 common grackles and nearly 12,000 red-winged blackbirds! The highlight of the day was the superb soup compilation dinner provided by David and Anton Kvernes. As in the past, we all send our sincerest thanks to Anton and David.

The CBC season ended on 01/05 with a count at Marion County. No species total was available but the sky was clear and the weather was near perfect The day ended with an indescribably beautiful clear sky sunset that seemed to last forever. We'd hoped to view the haunting silhouette of a great-horned owl day's end but, alas, it was not to be.

I love birds! - Rhonda R.

What's the Buzz?

North America has over 4,400 described species of native bees that pollinate wildflowers and crops. From the tiny sweat bee to the substantial carpenter bee, these local pollinators are hard at work in the floral landscapes of gardeners, farmers, forests, grasslands, and urban and wild lands.

Unfortunately, several species of native bees are showing disturbing signs of decline. Learn more about these colorful pollinators and how you can support them at www.pollinator.org

Bee ID

1. Macropis oil bee
2. US sweat bee
3. Squash and gourd bee
4. Impatient Bumble Bee
5. The Blue Orchard Bee
6. Yellow-faced
7. The Southeastern Blueberry
8. Valley Carpenter
9. Morisson's bumble bee
10. Perdita minima
11. Eastern Carpenter
12. Yellow-faced bumble
13. Rusty-patched bumble bee
14. Leafcutter bee
15. Miner bee
16. Digger bee
17. Wandering Cuckoo Bee
18. Sweat bee



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

Individual Member	\$15	Your Name	_____
Family	\$25	Street Address	_____
Student Voting Member	\$ 5	City, State, Zip	_____
Donation	_____	Phone Number	_____
Amount Enclosed	\$ _____	Email	_____



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I/We would like to received our newsletter via email: YES / NO
If you receive your newsletter electronically,
contact Laraine W. or Rhonda R. to check your dues status.

Conservation of Neotropical migratory birds in tropical hardwood and oil palm plantations

Tropical forests in the Americas are undergoing rapid conversion to commercial agriculture, and many migratory bird species that use these forests have experienced corresponding populations declines. Conservation research for migratory birds in the tropics has focused overwhelmingly on shade coffee plantations and adjacent forest, but both cover types are now in decline, creating an urgent need to evaluate conservation opportunities in other agricultural systems. A study found that mixed-native hardwood plantations supported the highest richness and diversity of all migrants and that the three hardwood plantation types generally outperformed oil palm plantations in richness and diversity metrics. Despite this, oil palm supported high abundance of several common and widespread species also experiencing range-wide population declines and may therefore play an important role in conserving common species. For the complete article visit <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0210293>



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& the North American Bluebird Society*



It's the Bee's knee(s)??