



# Southern Illinois Audubon Society

## NEWSLETTER

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

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Established in 1970

**The Pollinator Garden at Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge will be the subject of a presentation by Judy Groskind for SIAS on Friday, Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>, starting at 7 p.m. in the meeting room of the Carbondale Township Hall, Carbondale.** Entrance is from the rear, south side, of the building (216 E. Monroe St.) where two parking lots are available for use.

The pollinator garden is the joint effort of the Friends of Crab Orchard Refuge and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuge staff, to improve feeding and nesting areas for butterflies, moths, bees, hummingbirds, and pollinating. Judy Groskind describes herself as a Master Naturalist, an amateur bird and pollinator monitor, a Refuge volunteer, and current president of the Friends of Crab Orchard Refuge.

### SIAS Meetings Moving to the Carbondale Township Hall

Because of various construction projects and issues taking place at the First United Methodist Church, SIAS has moved our meeting site to the Carbondale Township Hall. This will be our permanent meeting location, with the exception of March as there is a conflict on that evening. The location of that program will be provided in the March 2019 newsletter.

We thank Nelda Hinckley for always getting us *into* the church on time!

Photograph by  
Miriam Link Mullison



### SIAS Winter to Spring Meeting Calendar

**March 22<sup>nd</sup>** – To Be Announced      **April 26<sup>th</sup>** – To Be Announced

**May** – SIAS picnic; date and location to be announced

### Wild bees will prevail

We formed a large human hive at our annual meeting on January 25 to hear a fascinating program by Mark Fletter of Dayempur Farm in Union County. Mark is the beekeeper at the farm's Center for Sustainable Living. From his 10 years of experience, he believes that wild bee colonies are doing very well despite all we read about the collapse of honey bees.

That particular condition is indeed happening in the huge commercial beekeeping industry, which involves transporting hives in semi-trailers from southeastern states to fruit and nut-tree orchards and other crop uses, mostly in California. Chemicals used in those orchards also affect the bees which are needed for pollination. Commercial bees are susceptible to bacteria and mites, but "It's hard to kill a bug on a bug," Mark said. Commercial honeybees are close to becoming domestic livestock. The increase of almond orchards, for example, is troubling in the large amount of water it takes to sustain an almond tree and the necessity for artificial pollination by commercial bee colonies.

Mark said small, backyard hives are helping to sustain wild bee populations. Dayempur has 10 hives, and Mark monitors 20 other wild colonies, including one in the brick wall of our meeting site, Carbondale Township Hall. "No one is feeding or medicating those bees," he said, and the self-sustaining colony has been there at least 10 years.

Bees have lived on Earth some 50 million years and will continue on their own. It is we humans who are causing the collapse of commercial hives by our penchant for feeling bigger is always better. *-Laraine Wright*

### A Very Generous SIAS Member

Although this does not relate to SIAS, it is something to squawk about. SIAS member Mary Nell Chew recently donated to cover the complete cost of a full Veterans Honor Flight to Washington D.C. Very awesome indeed!

### Strange 4-legged Creatures at a Birdfeeder

Recently David Kvernes wrote me of some strange visitors at this bird feeder on Skyline Drive in Carbondale. David describes them as 3-4 feet tall with 4 legs and hooves on their feet, nearly as big as Big Bird of Sesame Street fame, but not yellow or necessarily shaped like a bird. Their feathers, he said, almost looked like fur. He notes they had large tufts on their heads that they raised when they peered into the kitchen window to look at him and Anton. David states they travel in flock-like groups of 5 at a time and eat lots of birdseed that is scattered on the patio.

Puzzled by his description, I did what nearly every birder does now a days, I checked Google. After clicking on several links and scrolling through dozens of images, I think I might have come up with two possibilities. They're either Hippogriffs,

a magical creature that has the front legs, wings, and head of a giant eagle and the body, hind legs and tail of a horse (oh dear!), or deer.

Using the principle of Occam's Razor, (all things being the same go with the most likely option) also known as the "horses not zebras" rule, I've concluded they must be deer.

*-Rhonda R.*



## Upcoming Events & Activities

### Mar. 10 > Day in the Life of a Field Biologist

Join botanist Chris Benda from 2-3 p.m. at the Giant City State Pk. Visitors Center, 235 Giant City Rd., as he talks about the challenges and rewards of working outside in nature for a living. For more details, phone 618.457.4836.

### 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, 235 Giant City Rd. 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.

### Mar. 14 > Movie Night at the Cache

Join the folks at the Cache River Wetlands Center, 8885 State Rt. 37 S, Cypress, for the 3<sup>rd</sup> of their monthly Movie Night features. They'll be screening *Hotel Armadillo*.

This year there is 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: April 11: Flight School

### Mar. 20 > 1st Day of Spring Full Moon Hike

It's the 1st official day of spring and what better way to enjoy it than a hike under the magical glow of the full moon. Listen for the occasional call of the barred owl and the chirps of the spring peeper frogs as we hike along the 1/3 mile Stonefort Trail. For more information or to register, please call the Visitors Center at 618.457.4836.

### Apr. 5-7 > Indigenous Plants Symposium

The IL Native Plant Society Southern chapter's 2019 Illinois Indigenous Plants Symposium is scheduled for April 5-7 at John A. Logan College, Carterville, IL. The event will include a keynote speaker, workshops, guided hikes and a native plant sale. For more details or to register, visit [www.ill-inps.org](http://www.ill-inps.org)

### May 17-19 > IAS 2019 Spring Gathering

Register now for the IL Audubon Society's (IAS) Spring Gathering "Birding By The Big Lake". The event is being hosted by the Lake-Cook Chapter and will include 26 field trips, top-notch programs, great food, awesome auction and of course, old friends and new. For more details or to register, visit: <https://illinoisaudubon.org/annual-spring-gathering/>

## 31st Trinidad & Tobago Adventure – May 18-25

Join Nelda Hinckley and other naturalist guides for a tour of this two-island nation. 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 includes all meals, lodging, and field trips with naturalist guide).

Contact: Nelda W. Hinckley at 618.549.5588 or [neldahinckley@jalc.edu](mailto:neldahinckley@jalc.edu)

### News of our far-away friends by Laraine Wright

We can take great pleasure in hearing from our members and long-time supporters even though they no longer attend our meetings because of distance or health issues. Here's an update on a few of these friends you may remember:

Clark Ashby lives in a beautiful retirement community on the Patuxent River in Solomons, Maryland. For the many decades he and his late wife, Rhoda, lived in Carbondale, they were members of a sailing club at Crab Orchard Lake, so being near the water is a blessing for him. Clark and Rhoda were founding members of SIAS in 1970. I have asked him to send me memories of our early years. He stays active through correspondence and visits with family and friends. Clark maintains his membership and also sends a donation each year.

Biologist Mary Dresser retired and moved from Wisconsin to Barnum, Minnesota, just downwind from Hawk Ridge in Duluth. We thank her for her annual support.

Tracy Evans, who lives near Springfield, IL, has retired from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Our congratulations to her on her recent Ph.D. degree. You may remember her as she worked on her Master's through SIUC (she studied loggerhead shrikes at Crab Orchard NWR when they were on the decline). She, too, continues her membership and her good wishes for us.

Retired SIUC art professor Sylvia Greenfield now lives at The Landings retirement community on the east edge of Carbondale. Visitors are welcome!

Stan Harris celebrates his 101st birthday on March 5th. With him now is Clara McClure, who shares his home off New Era Road (on the acreage in front of his house is a native prairie established by Rob Rothrock). For several decades, Stan and Clara led wildflower walks for us and the Sierra Club. How we miss their presence at our meetings! Food and visits, cards and letters, are appreciated.

Lois Lembke, another long-time member, can be reached through me if you are interested in an update.

Cal Maginel lives at the Illinois Veterans Home in Anna. He and his late wife, Cathy, were attentive, active members for many years, full of cheer and news of the natural world at their small farm and through their outings in Southern Illinois. Cal and Cathy and son, Dave, earned our Conservationist of the Year award for their restoration work on the Cache River wetlands. Son Jim and his wife, Mary, continue as SIAS members, too.

Jim Smith of Homer, Ill., may not be a familiar name to you but he has been an SIAS member for years, following our activities from his historic farm (established in 1828). Jim has witnessed firsthand the destruction of the environment and wildlife by improper farming practices. He strives to ethically manage his own property. In his local area, he set up more than 300 bluebird boxes that he monitored himself and through volunteers he trained. Jim and his late wife, Eleanor, were seasoned travelers and campers. I think he would be glad to hear from any of you who want to share news and pictures of our region, which he has often visited and enjoyed.

I would be glad to pass on contact information about any of the above SIAS friends. Please call me at 618.457.8769 or email me at [larainewright66@gmail.com](mailto:larainewright66@gmail.com).

**Punography** -- I tried to catch some fog. I mist. / What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus. /

I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I can't put it down. / They told me I had type A blood but it was a typo. /

We took a class trip to the Coca-Cola factory. I hope there's no pop quiz. / Broken pencils are pointless. / I stayed up all night to see where the sun went. Then it dawned on me. / I did a theatrical performance about puns. It was a play on words.

## Birding predictions from 1977: how many came true?

By Laraine Wright

I recently found among the few papers I still have of the late Ben Gelman's a speech given in 1977 at the annual meeting of the Illinois Audubon Society. I cannot find the speaker's name, but he had traveled from the National Audubon Society office in New York to celebrate IAS's 80th anniversary.

His main topic was predictions of amateur birdwatching for the year 2000, then 23 years away. Today, we are almost 42 years away from the time of his speech. How many of his predictions came true?

1- "In the next 23 years there will be an enormous surge of interest in birds." Reasons: education, publicity, environmental activism, more leisure time. (This came true.) "I think the day is coming when almost any high school student will know, when you mention a Cape May warbler, what you are talking about." (*Not yet!*)

2- Bird groups and environmental organizations "will be one of the biggest and most powerful voting blocs around." (*Very sadly, still to come.*)

3- "In the year 2000, we'll have over 86,500 participants in over 2,000 Christmas Bird Counts." There will be so much interest in CBCs that the 10-mile circles will have to be redrawn smaller. (*Still waiting: in 2017, a record 2,536 counts were conducted with 73,153 participants.*)

4- By the year 2000, birders will have a shelf of expert guidebooks on such things as shorebirds and flycatchers "and so on." (*In fact, we now could have many shelves of such guides. The number of arcane guides truly has exceeded the wildest hopes of birders back in the 1970s.*)

5- "I fearlessly predict that some day you will be able to switch into a central bird alert system" using a series of 800 area code numbers. (*That did come true, but the Internet has quickly changed how we report and access those alerts.*)

6- We will someday be able to see and photograph birds in the dark. (*Yes.*)

7- By 2000, "a few very wealthy birders will be hopping here and there ... by personal one-man aircraft," the kind you strap on your back. (*Ha!*)

8- "We may one day be using radio transmissions to identify bird species flying over at night. ... We may even have a centrally located computer ... then when you have a puzzling bird, you enter all the details on a standard computer card, send it off, and in 1.3 seconds you have your answer printed out." (*40 years later, we track bird migrations from space, but we still can't definitively solve our bird identification problems by computer.*)

9- "I think we'll see a network of birders out on offshore oil rigs ... I thought I had Exxon very interested, and then they turned chicken." (*Exxon was too busy cooking the books.*)

## New IL Governor's Plans for Powering Illinois' Future

The office of Illinois Governor Pritzker just released the report from his Powering Illinois' Future Committee, co-chaired by the Illinois Environmental Council's Executive Director Jen Walling.

One well received recommendation in the report states that "the state should commit to 100% clean and renewable energy and ensure a just transition to that goal, so that rural and black and brown communities are not burdened by new policies and left behind in the transition to a clean energy economy. The new administration should invest in clean water infrastructure, expand energy efficiency and energy storage efforts, and electrify the state's public transportation sector."

## Gynandromorphs: half-male, half-female?

Recently a couple in Pennsylvania spotted a uniquely colored northern cardinal at their bird feeder. It was half-vermillion and half-taupe—its colors split right down the middle.

The anomaly is known as a bilateral gynandromorph. In plain language: half its body is male and the other half is female. "This remarkable bird is a genuine male/female chimera," says Daniel Hooper, a postdoctoral fellow at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.



Referred to as "half-siders", gynandromorphs are uncommon but not unheard of. They likely occur across all species of birds, Hooper says, but we're only likely to notice them in species where the adult males and females look distinct from each other, a trait known as sexual dimorphism. "Cardinals are one of the most well-known sexually dimorphic birds in North America—their bright red plumage in males is iconic—so people easily notice when they look different," Hooper says.

So, how does this happen? Hooper says it has to do with sex chromosomes in birds, which are different than in people. For the complete story, visit [www.nationalgeographic.com/](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/)

## Migratory birds face multiple threats from climate change

Some two billion birds migrate over the Gulf Coast each spring. Several recent studies suggest that climate change could make the trip tougher for many of these birds, with shifts in the arrival of spring affecting their ability to fuel up for migration.

Spring now arrives earlier in 76% of all U.S. National Wildlife Refuges, according to a new study, which could put birds out-of-sync with food availability and appropriate seasonal changes during their journey. Researchers based this finding on published data of first appearance of leaves and flowers of deciduous trees from 496 National Wildlife Refuges and four major North American bird migratory routes between 1901 and 2012.

In addition, the changes in seasonal timing doesn't sync along the whole migration path. Both spring and fall migrations could be affected by changes in food availability and other conditions along the route and at the birds' ultimate destinations, and in fall, birds could face stronger headwinds. <http://texasclimatenews.org/?p=15996>

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**Save Coal or Save Paradise?**

Have you heard John Prine's song about Paradise, in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky? It was paradise until Mr. Peabody's coal train hauled it all away. Long after the song protesting the horrors of strip mining made Paradise famous, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) realized that burning coal didn't make any economic sense. Now it's preparing to shut down the Paradise #3 coal plant.

These days the biggest supplier to the Paradise coal plant isn't Peabody - it's Bob Murray's Murray Energy. The same Bob Murray that donated over \$300,000 to President Trump and his inauguration.

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the Illinois Environmental Council,  
& the North American Bluebird Society*

So it's been no surprise that President Trump, a supporter of coal, has tweeted the TVA should save the aging coal plant.

TVA has said it wants to close the plant because of "flat to declining" load, low natural gas prices, expected high maintenance and regulatory compliance costs and "poor generation portfolio fit," among other reasons. TVA retired two other coal-burning units at the Paradise, Ky., site in 2017 because of pollution limits imposed by President Obama's administration's Mercury and Air Toxics Standards. The Trump administration is revisiting the underlying justification for the rule and has asked for input on whether to go further.

While EPA insists it will not weaken or eliminate the mercury standard itself, environmentalists say the administration is inviting legal challenges that eventually could upend the regulation.  
<https://www.politico.com/story/2019/02/11/trump-coal-1163128>

