



Southern Illinois Audubon Society Newsletter

March 2024
Vol. 31 No. 3

Southern Illinois Audubon Society (SIAS)
P.O. Box 222
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Established in 1970

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SIAS is the sponsor of
*The Birding Blitz of
Southernmost Illinois*
Over 21 years of
team birding for a cause!
Details can be found at:
www.facebook.com/groups/317666471615613/



Join in on the Birding Blitz Fun at the Blitz Awards Brunch on Sunday, April 28th

The April SIAS meeting will take place at the Haven Day Lodge, on the shore of Crab Orchard Lake, on Sunday, April 28th at 10 a.m. Join us as we celebrate the 22nd Birding Blitz at the Blitz Competition Brunch and Awards Ceremony. Drinks and snacks will be provided.

For participants, the Brunch starts at 9:30 a.m. Team species lists are to be turned in by 10 a.m. We'll introduce all teams and team members and compile a combined total species list for the day. Then we'll announce the winners of each category.

This is a fun opportunity to meet birders from throughout Illinois and surrounding states. You'll be surprised to find out how much fun the awards brunch can be as you listen to the stories told of team Blitz Day experiences. While the Blitz is a competition, a wonderful camaraderie exists between all participants. Because, even though the Blitz is a competition, all team members really want to do is see and/or hear as many birds as they can. And it's hard to beat southernmost IL for spring birding.

We've held our Awards Brunch at the Haven location for several years now. It is a beautiful, spacious, rustic lodge with big windows that provide an awe inspiring view of Crab Orchard Lake. The Haven is located on the south side of IL Rt. 13, at 10289 Haven Ln., Carbondale, opposite the Cambria Road turnout.

It not too late to register a team if you're interested in participating. Registration is \$25 per person. A team has to have a minimum of two members and chose a category to compete in. Each participant gets a Blitz t-shirt.

We ask that participants come up with a unique team name. And teams must raise a minimum of \$100 in pledges that will go towards habitat acquisition, restoration and preservation.

If you can't participate, please consider donating a pledge to one of the six teams competing. In the 22 years that the Blitz has been taking place, participants have raised over \$50,000 for habitat restoration and preservation in the Cache River Wetlands.

For more information on the Blitz and how to participate, visit our Facebook page [facebook.com/groups/317666471615613/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/317666471615613/) or email me at woodthrusheola@hotmail.com

Hope to see you at the awards brunch!

-Rhonda R.



Proposing Changes to the SIAS Meeting Time and Date

The board of SIAS had a discussion at its most recent meeting on the possibilities of changing the start time of regular meetings as well as the possibilities of moving the meeting on another day of the week. Since this is of course a subject that affects all members, it was agreed that the idea should be placed before all members via the monthly newsletter. We would like to have input from all members as to whether they are interested in moving either (or both) starting time and meeting day. The consensus from the board was that an earlier starting time of 6:00 p.m. was advisable and staying with the 4th Friday of the month seemed best. We would like to have additional input from all members to guide this decision. Please let me know if you have thoughts on these ideas. Contact me via an email or a text and I will gather results and share them with the board.

No changes will happen until the resumption of regular meetings in August. The August meeting is being tentatively set for 6 p.m. on Friday the 23rd but the time change is still dependent on responses.

My email is jemerck2@yahoo.com, and you can text me at 573.275.0021. Or contact Vicki Lang-Mendenhall at 618.697.9868 or vickil@su.edu.

-Joe Merkelbach

SIAS Annual Picnic May 19th

We will be returning to the Harvey Welch Pavilion at Hickory Ridge Golf Course, 2727 W Glenn Road, Carbondale, for our May 19th spring picnic. Arrive at 1 p.m. for set up and socializing, eat at 2 p.m. Both meat and meatless hotdogs, buns, condiments, and some beverages will be provided. Please bring a side dish, your own plates, utensils, and a beverage.

From Carbondale: take Main Street (IL Rt. 13) west to the intersection with Old Hwy 13 and New Era Road, turn north (right) onto New Era Road, drive 1.6 miles to Edgewood Lane, turn west (left) onto Edgewood Lane, follow road to park maintenance building parking lot.

From Murphysboro: take Walnut Street (IL Rt. 13) east to the intersection with Old Hwy 13 and New Era Road, turn north (left) onto New Era Road, drive 1.6 miles to Edgewood Lane, turn west (left) onto Edgewood Lane, follow road to park maintenance building parking lot.

SIAS Upcoming Meeting Calendar

May 19th – SIAS annual spring picnic to be held at Hickory Lodge Golf Course, Carbondale

June & July - No meeting, enjoy your summer!!

August 23rd - Mike Baltz on Birding the Bahamas

September 27th - Program to be announced

October 25th - Program to be announced

December 6th - Nov/Dec combined mtg. Program to be announced.

January 24th - Program to be announced

Spring Bird Count - Your Help Needed!!!

Spring Bird Count(s) will take place on **Saturday, May 4th** and **Sunday, May 5th** in all counties throughout Illinois.

You can help by contributing any amount of time you can and by covering as much area as you have time and energy to cover. Or consider counting at your home, walking your property and/or feeder watching for one-two hours. Compilers of local counties are below.

If possible, please provide compilers at least seven (7) days advance notice of your interest in participating.

Alexander Co., 05/04: Allen Gathman -

agathman@gmail.com

Franklin Co., 05/04:

Jarod Hitchings - jarod.hitchings@illinois.gov

Jackson Co., 05/04: Rhonda Rothrock - 618.684.6605,

woodthrusheola@hotmail.com

Pulaski Co., 05/05: Rhonda Rothrock - 618.684.6605,

woodthrusheola@hotmail.com

Pope Co., 05/04 Andrea Douglas -

anderatd@yahoo.com

Saline Co., 05/04: Cathie DeNeal - ?

Williamson Co., 05/04 & 05: Vicki Lang-Mendenhall -

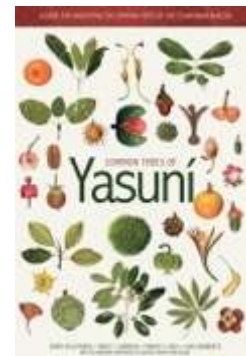
618.697.9868, vickil@siu.edu

Union Co., 05/04: Vern Kleen - vkleen@comcast.net

March Program Highlights We thank Dr. Nancy Garwood for introducing us to Yasuni National Park and sharing her years of work. The Yasuni National Park, in the Ecuadorian Amazon, was established in 1979 and is incredibly diverse with regard to species. The area of 3,900 square miles is home to more than 4000 vascular plants, ~600 bird species, ~140 amphibians, ~120 reptiles, ~200 mammals, more than 400 fishes, and ~100,000 insects. Over 130 of these are globally threatened.

Dr. Nancy Garwood shared her enthusiasm with and dedication to her work at Yasuni National Park. Her first projects, 50 years ago in Panama, were community level studies of the earliest stages of forest regeneration after earthquake-caused landslides and the phenology of seed dispersal and germination. She recently returned to initiate a comparative phenological study. Phenology is the study of cyclic and seasonal natural phenomena in relation to climate and plant and animal life.

Part of Nancy's work included a collaborative effort to produce a guide for identifying the common trees of the area. The book, The Common Trees of Yasuni: A Guide for Identifying the Common Trees of the Ecuadorian Amazon, contains 250 species organized by the morphology of their leaves. The book is available in Spanish and English. Funding is being sought so to produce the book in Huaorani, the language of the indigenous Huaorani peoples. *-Rhonda R.*



Volunteer Butterfly Monitors Needed

The Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network (IBMN) and Illinois Odonate Survey (IOS) are recruiting Citizen Science volunteers to monitor these populations in Southern Illinois. Monitors are needed for several public land sites and may be given a trail already mapped by IBMN or IOS, with locations that are close to their home community. Volunteers pledge to turn in at least 8 surveys of their assigned trail between mid-May and late August. These trails can usually be walked at a slow pace in about one to two hours. It is strongly encouraged that potential monitors register and view the "2024 Southern Illinois Workshops" online at the IBMN website: <https://ibmn.org/> or YouTube IBMN site before they attend these field events.

Also, participants are asked to pre-register for the field training by calling Crab Orchard NWR Visitor Ctr. (618.997.3344), Barkhausen Cache River Wetland Ctr (618.657.2064), or Giant City State Pk (618.457.4836).

There is no charge for the training or the workshops. Bring binoculars if you have them, sack lunches, a water bottle and appropriate clothing for outdoor walking. Participants are welcome to attend both days. New monitors must attend at least the first day's session. Both days will offer valuable information for returning experienced monitors. The workshop plan is:

Saturday May 4 - Focus on Butterflies

10:00AM to Noon: Field Training.

Meet at the Crab Orchard NWR Visitor's Center and we will walk to the Headquarters Prairie. This site will be used to demonstrate a monitoring walk using the Pollard protocol.

Noon to 1PM : Lunch at the Visitors Center patio (participants are asked to bring a sack lunch) or Harmony Trail picnic area.

1PM to 3:30PM: Field Training. We will caravan from the CONWR Visitor's Center to Cache River Wetland Ctr, meeting in the Visitor's Center and hiking nearby.

Sunday May 5 -

Focus on Dragonflies

10:00AM to Noon: Field Training

Meet at the Giant City Visitors center inside for a brief lecture.

Noon to 1PM: Lunch in the Visitor's Center (, please bring a sack lunch)

1PM to 3:30PM: Caravan to Allen Pond (Giant City location)



What's Happening in Southernmost IL...

...migrating warblers are arriving with their hearts full of song

Monthly Birding with SIAS at Evergreen Park

Saturday, May 11th & June 8th, from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

Meet at the Red Oak Shelter that sets along Carbondale Reservoir lake in Evergreen Park on the south side of Carbondale.

Directions (from IL Rt. 51 a.k.a. South Illinois Avenue): Take IL Rt. 51 south from Carbondale to the stop-light intersection with Pleasant Hill Rd., turn west onto Pleasant Hill Rd., follow it to west most park entrance, turn south, follow road south then east to the small shelter near the water. For more info call Kirsten Trimble at 618.521.4166

Spring Trash Blasts on the Shawnee National Forest

First Friday of each month, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

The USDA Shawnee National Forest Service, Friends of the Shawnee, and the IL Extension Office will partner to host these annual spring Trash Blasts! They will happen on the first Friday in May & June from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at various locations in the Shawnee National Forest.

Attendees will break into small teams of volunteers to collect litter from selected sites. No matter what we find, we try to remove it to help restore the area to its natural state. Volunteers should wear sturdy shoes, bring their leather work gloves, wear long pants, and closed-toed shoes. If you do not have leather gloves we can help provide them for you. Trash buckets and trash grabbers will be provided for volunteers to use during the trash blast.

This event is limited to 30 participants. **Dates & locations:**

May 3rd at Bean Ridge (Alexander County),

June 7 at Ripple Hollow (Union County). If you would like to learn more about this program, contact Anne Townsend at cupquake@illinois.edu.

Register at <https://go.illinois.edu/TrashBlastsSpring2024>

Earth Day 2024

April 22nd - The first Earth Day in 1970 mobilized millions of Americans from all walks of life to birth the modern environmental movement.

Since then, Earth Day has evolved into the largest civic event on Earth, activating billions across 192 countries to safeguard our planet and fight for a brighter future.

SIAS was established on that first Earth Day, 54 years ago.

Those SIAS founding members worked with others to prevent the damming of Lusk Creek to form a lake.

Events at Giant City St. Pk.

May 11th - Map & Compass 101 by Anne Townsend, 10:00 a.m.- noon.
Reptile Program by Jeremy Schumacher, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

June 8th - Insects in the Evening, 8:30-10:00 p.m.

July 28th - Flora of One Horse Gap by Christopher Benda, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Registration required for all these events.

Phone Giant City State Park Visitor's Center,
235 Giant City Rd, Makanda, at
618.457.4836 for more details or to register.



iNaturalist Bioblitz at Cypress Creek NW Refuge

April 27th & 28th - Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge is currently working on updating its species list in order to better represent the incredible diversity of this unique area. Each National Wildlife Refuge (USFWS) has its own species list that can be accessed on the refuge's website. These lists are useful for visitors to the refuge but are also used for planning purposes by the USFWS. The Friends of the Cache will be hosting an iNaturalist bioblitz the weekend of April 27th & 28th to give a boost to the number of species on the list.

To participate in the Bioblitz, upload your observations on the iNaturalist app from anywhere within the refuge. Your observations will automatically be added to the Biodiversity of Cypress Creek NWR project. For more info about the trails and activities at the Refuge, visit <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/cypress-creek>.

If you are already participating in the Birding Blitz of Southern IL, please take a few minutes to upload your observations on iNaturalist whenever you are on the Cypress Creek NWR. For questions, contact Wildlife Biologist Karen Mangan at Karen.Mangan@fws.gov.

Garlic Mustard Pulls on the Shawnee National Forest

May 7th - Ava Cave Zoological Area, Jackson Co., 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

May 14th & 21st - Fink Sandstone Barrens, Pope Co., 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Friends of the Shawnee National Forest, US Dept. of Agriculture Shawnee National Forest, and IL Extension are partnering up to host garlic mustard pulls on these Tuesdays. Folks will break into teams to hand-pull garlic mustard at these sites. After we are done, at noon, there will be a short guided hike for us to learn more about the botany of the area. Registration required. For more info, contact Anne Townsend at cupquake@illinois.edu

Register at: <https://tinyurl.com/2zefmt3p>

GreenEarth C'dale Big 50th Celebration

May 18th - In 1974, several conservation-minded community members and leaders in Carbondale had the foresight to establish a nonprofit organization that would protect green space within the growing city.

They knew that future generations would appreciate the benefits that green space would offer. With a seed grant from the City in the amount of \$102,868, Green Earth grew into a successful organization, fulfilling its purpose of acquiring, preserving, and providing public access to natural areas for the people of Carbondale. We now maintain seven nature preserves, totaling approximately 225 acres and nine miles of trails.

Join in the celebration at Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship for an evening of camaraderie, music, photo and history displays, hors d'oeuvres, and beverages. This free event will include guest speakers, raffles, and giveaways. Registration is free but required. For more details or to register, visit: <https://www.greenearthinc.org/50>

Shawnee Group Sierra Club Service Outings

Help Save High Quality Natural Areas. Shawnee Group is committed to helping rid high-quality natural areas of non-native invasive plants (NNIS) that are threatening to crowd out our native plant communities at La-Rue Pine Hills Research Natural Area and at Fern Rocks Nature Preserve in Giant City State Park. To volunteer, contact Barb at 618.549.9684.

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

Individual Member	\$15
Family	\$25
Student Voting Member	\$ 5
Donation	\$ _____
Amount Enclosed	\$ _____

Your Name	_____
Street Address	_____
City, State, Zip	_____
Phone Number	_____
Email	_____

Mail to: Southern Illinois Audubon Society
Attn: Membership
P.O. Box 222, Carbondale, IL 62903-0222

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

Spring time Spring time!
Flying thru the clouds with
the birds and butterflies.
I like spring because it is the
best by far.



Birding Walks

WITH MASTER NATURALIST LILY GLAESER

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



8:30am to 10:00am

May 9
Green Earth
Chautauqua Bottoms

May 12
Crab Orchard NWR
Homestead Trail

May 23
Green Earth
Oakland Preserve

May 26
Green Earth
Fernlands Preserve



All are welcome. Binoculars are available.

Register at:
go.illinois.edu/BirdWithLily

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University of Illinois - U.S. Department of Agriculture
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Southern Illinois Audubon Society
P.O. Box 222
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*Affiliate of the Illinois Audubon Society and
the Illinois Environmental Council*



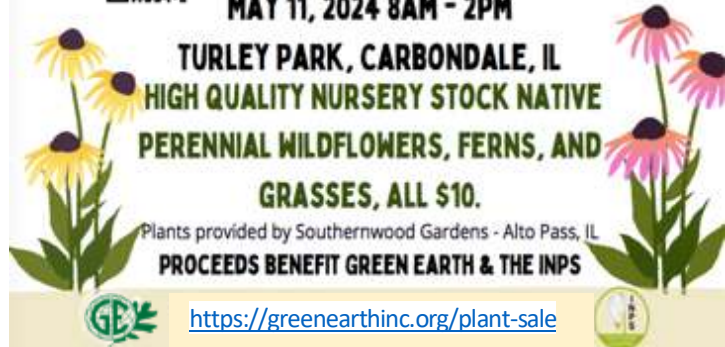
Illinois Native Plant Sale



MAY 11, 2024 8AM - 2PM

TURLEY PARK, CARBONDALE, IL
HIGH QUALITY NURSERY STOCK NATIVE
PERENNIAL WILDFLOWERS, FERNS, AND
GRASSES, ALL \$10.

Plants provided by Southernwood Gardens - Alto Pass, IL
PROCEEDS BENEFIT GREEN EARTH & THE INPS



<https://greenearthinc.org/plant-sale>

June 6
Green Earth
Stan Harris
Prairie Nature
Preserve

June 9
SIUC Campus Lake

June 13
Green Earth
Chautauqua
Bottoms

June 30
Crab Orchard NWR
Homestead Trail



"I seeeeeee you!"

