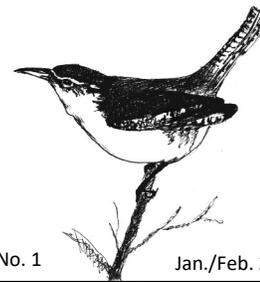


The Chat



Newsletter of the Robert Cooper Audubon Society, serving East Central Indiana

Volume 37, No. 1

Jan./Feb. 2011

January 10th The Birds of Cuba

Come enjoy the beauty of Cuba and its birds at our **January 10** meeting with Jean Ulman. Jean, birder extraordinaire and one-time Field Trip Chair for our chapter, went to Cuba last March to survey migratory birds.

Sponsored by the Indiana Audubon Society and organized by the Caribbean Conservation Trust, the trip took fourteen participants throughout Cuba for two weeks as they counted every single bird they encountered.

“We saw most of the Cuban endemics, visited interesting places, saw amazing sights, and met wonderful people,” Jean reports. “I want to share some of the experiences and images of that trip.”



Cuban Emerald Hummingbird

Refreshments and time to socialize will begin at Minnetrista at **7:00**, followed by the chapter meeting at **7:15** and Jean’s program at **7:30**. As always, non-Audubon members are welcome, so bring a friend!



February 14th White River Watershed Project

If you haven’t thought about your watershed lately, you should! The things that end up in a watershed affect the people and the wildlife that live there, and each of us can help improve the quality of our respective watersheds.

Join us on **February 14** for a presentation on the White River Watershed Project (WRWP), which plays an important role in much of East Central Indiana. Colby Gray, project coordinator for WRWP (and a designer and planner for Flatland Resources) will tell us about the project’s origins, history, recent projects, and exciting projects for the coming year.

The WRWP is administered through the Delaware County Soil and

Water Conservation District and is a citizen partnership dedicated to improving water quality through conservation and best management practices.

Refreshments and time to socialize will begin at Minnetrista at **7:00**, followed by the chapter meeting at **7:15** and Colby’s program at **7:30**.

2010 Conservation Award Winners

Our annual conservation awards banquet, held on November 8 at Minnetrista, was a wonderful evening, with several dozen members, guests, and friends of the Robert Cooper Audubon Society on hand. The highlight of the evening, of course, was learning what each of the four award winners has done to win his or her respective awards.

The **Robert H. and Esther (Munro) Cooper Conservation Award**, the chapter’s highest honor, went to **Charlie Mason** for his tireless commitment since 2007 to informing ECI residents about the importance of native trees and to encouraging businesses, churches, conservation groups, and individuals – anyone who wants to help – to plant them. He and his wife Charlotte cleared out a .4-acre plot at Westview Elementary School, eventually leading 50 of the

Continued on page 3

Jan./Feb. Bird of the Month: Yellow-Rumped Warbler

Yellow-Rumped Warbler:
Dendroica Coronata
By Helen Twibell

(continued from
our November/
December issue)



The yellow-rumped warbler is mainly an insect eater and may sally out from the outer tree canopy at medium

heights where it usually stays, to catch an insect in mid-air.

In winter, where insects are not available, it eats berries and seeds. The fruits of wax myrtle, red cedar and poison ivy are staple winter food. The warbler got its former name, myrtle warbler, from the habit of eating wax myrtle fruits.

The yellow-rumped warbler usually does not come to eat at feed-

ers, but occasionally may be seen there. At feeding shelves they may be attracted by doughnuts, crumbs, suet and sunflower seeds.

On the breeding grounds, yellow-rumped warblers live in coniferous woodlands and edges, and, to a lesser extent, deciduous forests. The migrating warblers seem to be everywhere – in open woods, shrubby habitats, parks and residential areas.

The voice of the yellow-rumped warbler most easily recognized is a bright, loud c-h-i-p. The bird has a trilling song, but recognizing it takes practice experts say.

On the breeding grounds the nest of the warbler is generally in an evergreen from 5 to 50 feet up, most commonly about 15 feet. The loose,

bulky nest is usually saddled on a limb part way out from the trunk. It's made of twigs, grasses, rootlets, moss and plant fibers and is thickly lined with hair and feathers. The 4 or 5 white eggs are speckled with brown.

As concerns conservation status, since the yellow-rumped warbler is considered one of the most abundant of warblers, we see no evidence that there is any danger of extinction of this species at present or in the near future.

TogetherGreen Project Update

By Tom Reeve, project manager

In August 2010, the Robert Cooper Audubon Society was awarded a \$20,000 TogetherGreen Innovation Grant. For details on the grant and the TogetherGreen program, visit www.cooperaudubon.org and www.togethergreen.org.

Work has begun on the restoration of the Cardinal Greenway and the Hughes Nature Preserve. We have had three workdays: one with schoolchildren only, one with Audubon adult volunteers only, and one was with both groups. Together, we have removed approximately 2 acres of honeysuckle. It's a start.

Now that winter is in full swing, we are slowing our removal efforts. There will be some workdays, but for the most part our efforts will be much smaller. I am meeting with an Eagle Scout to see if he would like to adopt a section of the removal. Come February and March, removal will get started up again, and we will then have our tree plantings in April and May.

Training workshop

The TogetherGreen Innovation Grant program includes a 3-day long training workshop to orient the grant managers on what is expected of them. For our grant, I had the privilege of attending the grant training workshop at the National Conservation Training Center in Shephardstown, WV.

Our first workshop provided a good, frank discussion on increasing the diversity of the conservation movement. The leader, Angela Park, worked at The White House in both terms of the Clinton/Gore administration, was co-founder and deputy director of the Environmental Leadership Program, and coordinated state level sustainable development policy initiatives at the Center for Policy Alternatives. This session was an indicator of the quality of training that was to come.

Steve Curwood, host of *Living on Earth* on PRI, gave the keynote talk. He was a passionate speaker who really amped us up to work on our conservation efforts. Our media training was given by Julie Scardina, Animal Ambassador for Sea World/Busch Gardens. The next day, Julie was on the *Today Show* and we were able to watch her put what she taught us into action.

Our final training, given by Krishna Roy, who has raised over \$65 million in her career, was on fundraising and leveraging the TogetherGreen Grant. From her inspiration, I have begun looking to our local foundations to help us expand our restoration work south along the greenway and around Prairie Creek Reservoir. Hopefully, in the coming months, we will be able to say that we have secured enough funding to finish the restoration of the greenway.



2010 Conservation Award Winners (continued from page 1)

children in planting native trees on the site, turning it into a small nature area for the school. In 2009 he personally purchased 720 seedlings and started 150 other trees from seed, to give away to such groups. In 2010, with the help of our own Conservation Group, Charlie brought 1,550 saplings to ECI on behalf of our chapter and distributed them to various organizations and individuals around the region.

Marilyn Marks was awarded the **Clyde W. Hibbs Conservation Education Award** for her work in teaching gardening skills to children at Motivate Our Minds (MOMs), in Muncie. Through the after-school program and the even-larger summer program, Marilyn teaches children how to plant, weed, and raise produce, which is sold at the Minnetrista's Farmers Market and is incorporated into after-school snacks for the students. Marilyn also organizes garden work days for families and neighbors, and has been expanding her knowledge through the principles of Italy's Slow Food Movement.

The **Phyllis Yuhás Wildlife Habitat Preservation Award** was presented to **Robin and Mark Scott**, who live next to Summit Lake State Park in Henry County. In 2007, working with our chapter's Conservation Group, the Scotts planted an 18-acre prairie on their 27-acre property, using Henry county native plants in the seed mix and buffering a native prairie in the Rogersville pioneer cemetery. The project has turned fallow farmland, covered mostly with non-native fescue grass, into restored prairie that provides important habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Kent Hanauer, Regional Biologist for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, was awarded the **Richard Greene Public Service Award** because of his work in assisting landowners and groups (such as our own chapter) in habitat preservation/restoration projects. Kent is based at Wilbur Wright Fish and Wildlife Area north of New Castle, but his work covers our chapter's entire region except for Grant County. Kent's mission is to help private landowners convert their property into higher quality wildlife habitat with the assistance of various government funding sources. He has been a strong partner to our chapter's Conservation Group on several habitat restoration projects, including the Zeigler Woods Nature Preserve, and he also played a key role in the Province Pond Osprey platform project.

You can see photos of the evening's events at our website:
www.cooperaudubon.org.



Marilyn Marks, Kent Hanauer, Robin Scott, Charlie Mason

Thanks to Our Supporters!

MANY thanks go to the following individuals and businesses that helped us put together a wonderful evening:

- Seedy Sally's (Pendleton), Joel's Appliances (Muncie), G & M Pet and Garden Center, Phil Tuttle, and Lis Mitchell, for generously donating door prizes
- Minnetrista staff, for use of their beautiful facilities, for this and all of our other monthly programs
- Bella Avanti, for catering a fabulous buffet meal

Status of the Indiana Breeding Bird Atlas Project in ECI

The Indiana Breeding Bird Atlas Project started in 2005 with the purpose of mapping the distribution of breeding birds in Indiana. Administration of the INBBA is done by the non-game division of DNR. Field work to gather the necessary data was to be done primarily by volunteers. When no volunteers were forthcoming in ECI, DNR hired a seasonal employee to do field work the first year in Delaware County. In 2006 a second seasonal employee was hired and one volunteer joined the project in ECI. By 2008 the two seasonal employees had completed atlas work in Blackford, Grant, Henry, Madison and Randolph Counties; atlas field work was finished in Delaware County in 2010.

The atlas project revealed 121 species that were potentially breeding in ECI; 104 of those species were confirmed to be breeding. Some of the unusual or interesting species that were confirmed are: Blue-winged Teal, Hooded Merganser, Wild Turkey, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Pied-billed Grebe, Black Vulture, Osprey, Red-shouldered Hawk, Sora, American Coot, Black-billed Cuckoo, Common Nighthawk, Cliff Swallow, Sedge Wren, Northern Parula and Prothonotary Warbler.

More information on the INBBA is available on the internet at www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bba/index.cfm?fa=explore.
ProjectHome&BBA_ID=IN2005.

For comments or questions about the INBBA in ECI, please contact Bill Grummer at 765-254-1943 or billcarollee@comcast.net.

Robert Cooper Audubon Society



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The Chat is published 5 times a year by the Robert Cooper Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society, serving Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Henry, Jay, Madison, and Randolph counties.

Dates for Your Calendar

January 10: The Birds of Cuba
February 14: White River Watershed Project

Upcoming spring activities (dates TBA)

- Trips to Summit Lake and the Limberlost
- May Birding Festival
- Magee Marsh overnight

Chapter Website: www.cooperaudubon.org

Email: cooperaudubon@gmail.com

Meetings

Program meetings are held on the second
Monday of each month (except July & August)
at Minnetrista
1200 N. Minnetrista Parkway
Muncie, IN

7:00 p.m.: Coffee and Gathering

7:15 p.m.: Chapter Business

7:30 p.m.: Scheduled Program



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