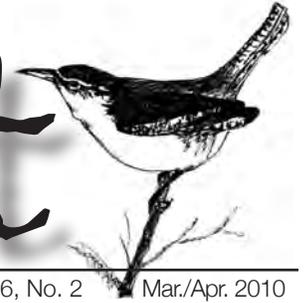


# The Chat



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

Volume 36, No. 2 Mar./Apr. 2010

## March 8: Rain Gardens in East Central Indiana

A rain garden is a planted depression that allows rainwater runoff from roofs, driveways, walkways, and compacted lawn areas the opportunity to be absorbed. Rain gardens can significantly cut down on the amount of pollution reaching creeks and streams. This program will be presented by Holly Chaille, development officer of the Madison County Community Foundation and former Watershed Coordinator for the White River Watershed Project. She will introduce the concept of rain gardens and give attendees some basic information needed for establishing one in their own yard.

We'll hear about the native plants recommended for rain gardens: a selection of wetland edge vegetation, such as wildflowers, sedges, rushes, ferns, shrubs and small trees that take up excess water flowing into the rain garden. We will see examples of successful rain gardens in the area.

Join us at Minnetrista on March 8 for refreshments and socializing at 7:00 p.m., with the chapter meeting beginning at 7:15, followed by the rain garden program at 7:30.

## April 12: Barred Owls in Shadyside Park

Jean and Tom Harbron will present the Barred Owls in Shadyside Park. This pictorial odyssey began in 1999 and followed the family of owls until their demise in 2009. For more than thirty years there was a family of Barred Owls in the grove of sycamore trees between Shadyside Lake and Killbuck Creek in Anderson, Indiana. For most of those years, Jean and Tom enjoyed the sight of baby owls each summer with the parents carefully watching over them and bringing them food. This dynasty of owls ended last summer, when for the first time in decades, there were no Barred Owls in the sycamore grove. "Junior," (*pictured at left*) as the Harbrons called him when he first fledged, was the last of his line to rule the grove. Tom's wonderful photography and Jean's loving narrative tell the story of the owls that captured the hearts of thousands of trail walkers at Shadyside Lakes. The Harbrons are the authors of the popular website *Birds of Madison County* for which they received The Clyde W. Hibbs Conservation Award from our chapter in 1999. The site is located at [www.fruitjar.org/birds](http://www.fruitjar.org/birds). Tom is retired from Anderson University and Jean from a career as a physical therapist.

Join us at Minnetrista on April 12 for refreshments and socializing at 7:00 p.m., with the chapter meeting beginning at 7:15, followed by the Barred Owls program at 7:30.

### Membership Renewal

If you are a chapter-only member or would like to become one, membership dues were due in January. (We forgot to remind everyone!) To renew or start a new membership (\$20, which go entirely to the support of our chapter), please go to our website, [www.cooperaudubon.org](http://www.cooperaudubon.org), and click on "About Our Chapter." You can download, print, and mail a membership form. Or you can write to our Membership Chair directly, at [laurie.lindberg@gmail.com](mailto:laurie.lindberg@gmail.com), to request a form.

---

# Peregrine Falcon: March/April Bird of the Month

---

Peregrine Falcon:  
*Falco peregrines*  
By Helen Twibell



*Continued from  
the Jan./Feb. Chat*

Peregrines favor seacoast areas and occur sparingly throughout the far West. Many migrate south along the outer beaches, flying long distance over the water and often perching on the masts of coast-wise vessels in order to hunt sea birds. They breed from Alaska and Canadian Arctic south throughout the mountainous West and sparingly in the East, which is increasing. They winter near coasts north to British Columbia and Massachusetts and Indiana is listed in one place as a wintering local. My sister and her husband believe they cited one last year at their large farm pond where many large birds stop on migration. Mumford and Keller report on seeing some in Indiana, but say that no nests have been reported as being found. The bird survey chart for Indiana lists it as a pretty rare resident of the state in the winter and that it may be pres-

ent in other seasons but not seen often. Many peregrines are reported as being residents of large cities (none named) in skyscrapers and under bridges where ready made ledges are available for nesting. (In nature the female lays eggs in a "scrape" on a high ledge in whatever dirt and debris is present.) Three or four white with heavy streaks and spots are hatched. The male helps the female somewhat in the incubation period.

In the cities where peregrine falcons have settled, pigeons, of necessity, have become the main diet of the bird. This, of course, causes city authorities to welcome their presence. Muncie was the recipient of a clutch of six young falcons in 1999 which were "hacked", or brought in, by a group of science students from Ball State who were members of The Wildlife Society. They were participants in a national project to release peregrine falcons and to reestablish the then endangered species, in the wild. (The peregrine falcons had been almost wiped out in the 1940's and 1960's by the insecticide DDT until it was finally banned. This landed the peregrine falcon

on the Endangered List--especially in the East.) The students brought the clutch of six to Muncie from a breeder in S. Dakota and made a home for them on top of the six-story Delaware Bldg. On E. Jackson Street. The young falcons were about 43 days old when they were examined, banded and placed in two enclosed boxes. These falcons were to repopulate the community with birds of prey who would eventually help to eradicate the unhealthful nuisance of the pigeon overpopulation in the downtown area. The young falcons released and stayed until September when they left for winter grounds---and did not return to Muncie. One was found in New York in October--dead; and another, Scorpio, was discovered in Davenport, Iowa by the Wildlife Dept in the year 2000, having taken up residence under a bridge. As far as is known, she may still be doing well there.

The peregrine falcon was taken off the Endangered List in 2001 as a result of the reestablishment project.

---

## 2009 Christmas Bird Count Results

The Muncie Christmas Bird Count was held on Dec. 20, 2009 as part of the 110th Christmas Bird Count. Mallards were the most numerous with a count of 1,041, slightly less than the 1,083 seen last year. This year, several species were reported for the first time, including 11 Northern Shovelers, 18 Redheads, Ruddy Duck (CW), one American Pipit, one Fox Sparrow and one Purple Finch. For more information and a complete chart of the bird count results and history, please visit [www.cooperaudubon.org](http://www.cooperaudubon.org).

# 2010 Spring Field Trips

## May 1-2 : Magee Marsh Overnight Field Trip

Don't miss the chance to do some of the best birding of your entire life! Magee Marsh (formerly Crane Creek) and the adjacent Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, located along Lake Erie in northern Ohio, are considered one of the top 10 birding sites in all of North America! The highlights of the year are spring and fall migrations, when hundreds of species--and thousands of individual birds--pass through on their way north or south each year.

On May 1 & 2 we'll join the Mississinewa Audubon Club for an overnight birding trip to witness this spectacular display of waterfowl, waterbirds, shorebirds, and songbirds, as well as bald eagles, peregrine falcons, osprey, and an impressive variety of hawks.

A forested beach ridge located on Magee Marsh, one of Ohio's finest remaining wetlands, provides a critical feeding and resting habitat for more than 150 species of migrating songbirds, including 36 species of warblers, as they rest and refuel before continuing on their journey north across Lake Erie.

The Mississinewa Audubon Club has booked a block of rooms in the Toledo-Oregon Holiday Inn Express for the night of May 1, at a group rate of \$87.95, plus tax, for a king or double queen room. Reservations must be made by April 1 to get this rate. Participants are also welcome to book their own rooms in any of the hotels available in the Oregon area (a Toledo suburb), but please note that hotels fill up quickly each year around migration time!

If interested in joining us for this trip, especially if you're interested in reserving a room at the Holiday Inn Express, please contact Sarah McKillip for more details, at [smregister@bsu.edu](mailto:smregister@bsu.edu).

## April 1: Owl Calling Field Trip

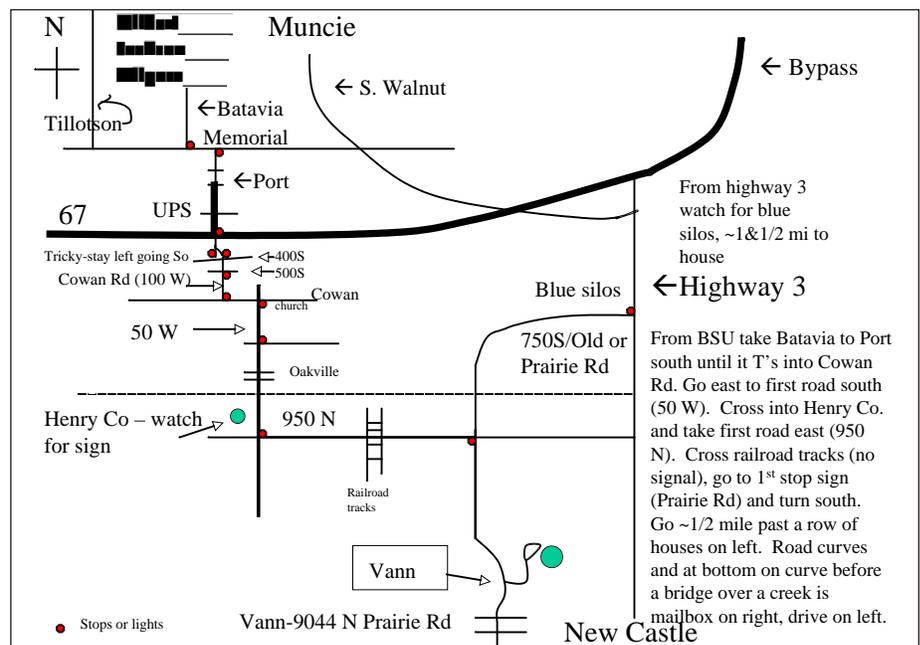
RCAS will be teaming up with BSU's Wildlife Society and Kamal Islam for an evening of owl-calling at Cooper Farm, on Bethel Ave., west of Muncie. The exact time of the trip has not yet been announced, but the car-pool will be at the Cooper Science parking lot, on Ball State's campus, that evening. Please stay tuned for more details or feel free to contact Sarah McKillip.

## April 25: Vanns' Property Tour

RCAS will be heading out April 25 9 a.m. to Carolyn and John Vanns' property (see map below). Carolyn is a professor of biology and John is a professor in the College of Business, and teaches courses emphasizing sustainability. If weather permits, there will be an informal guided tour of their wooded acreage, time for hikes, and some bird watching. Please feel free to carpool from Cooper Science parking lot at 8:15 a.m. with the field trip coordinator.

## March 20: Waterfowl Fieldtrip

RCAS will be joining the Mississinewa Audubon Club for a full day of birding. We will be focusing on waterfowl and shorebirds. The tentative plan is to visit Prairie Creek Reservoir, Summit Lake, Province Pond and Charlie's Marsh. RCAS will rendezvous with MAC at a location to be determined. Please check our website for details or contact Sarah McKillip at [smregister@bsu.edu](mailto:smregister@bsu.edu).



# Robert Cooper Audubon Society



Robert Cooper Audubon Society.  
Nona Nunnelly  
1302 N. Alden Rd.  
Muncie, IN 47304

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 544  
Muncie, IN

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Dated Material- Please Deliver Promptly

*The Chat* is published 7 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

**March 8** Rain Gardens program  
**March 20** Waterfowl Field Trip  
**April 1** Owl Calling Field Trip  
**April 12** Barred Owl program  
**April 25** Vanns' Property Tour  
**May 1-2** Magee Marsh Overnight Fieldtrip

**Chapter Website:** [www.cooperaudubon.org](http://www.cooperaudubon.org)  
**Email:** [cooperaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:cooperaudubon@gmail.com)

## Meetings

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

**7:00 p.m.:** Coffee & Gathering  
**7:15 p.m.:** Chapter Business  
**7:30 p.m.:** Scheduled Program



Printed on  
recycled  
paper 25%  
post-con-  
sumer fiber

## Officers

President:	Barb Stedman	288-2890
Vice President:	Jon Creek	348-4019
Recording Sec.:	Barb Hesselgrave	228-9673
Treasurer	Nona Nunnelly	284-0751

## Directors

2009-10	Dave Cramer	260-726-9492
	Frank Meeker	289-5635
2009-2011	Joel Jeffcoat	286-2896
	Phil Tuttle	289-4251

## Committee Chairs

Conservation:	Charlie Mason	288-9937
Education:	Pam Kistler	284-0946
Field trip:	Sarah McKillip	287-8464
Hospitality:	Cynda Turner	289-9390
Membership:	Laurie Lindberg	282-7516
Newsletter ed.:	Beth Simmons	812-343-8927
Program:	Lois Rockhill	287-8698
Publicity:		