

The Chat



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

Volume 37, No. 3

May/June 2011

Spring Birding Extravaganza!



Is that a Downy or Hairy Woodpecker at your feeder? A Black-capped or Carolina Chickadee? If you enjoy watching birds in your back yard but don't always know what you're seeing, we'll help you gain the skills to identify more of the birds you'd typically see around East

Central Indiana. Join us for a full day at our Spring Birding Extravaganza on Saturday, **April 23**, from **9 am to 3:30 pm**, at **Minnetrista**!

We'll give you the confidence to identify birds, by sight, sound, and behavior; give you tips for selecting the equipment you need to become a first-class birder; and more! We'll have prizes for the day's best "students," and every participant will receive a chokecherry sapling, to take home and plant. (Chokecherries are small trees that provide food for birds, especially important for birds that spend the winter in our area.)

Saturday, April 23, 9 am - 3:30 pm

At Minnetrista, in Muncie

Admission for Audubon and Minnetrista members is **FREE**

All others: \$5 for the entire day

*Bring a **brown-bag lunch** and reusable **beverage container** (water and coffee will be available on-site)*

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May 9

Wildflowers of Mounds State Park

This time of year, Angie Manuel is particularly fond of spring wildflowers, and will share that love with attendees at the **May 9** meeting.

Angie is the full-time naturalist interpreter at Mounds State Park in Madison County and has been with the DNR for 4 years. She previously worked at the Indiana Dunes and Potato Creek State Parks.

Interpretation blends science with art to touch lives and inspire an awareness and appreciation for natural and cultural resources. Angie loves everything about Mounds State Park, but her favorite activity is leading eager young students on field trips to discover the secrets of nature throughout this beautiful setting. Join us as we explore the wild world of Mounds State Park through its abundance of wild flowers!

Time to socialize will begin at 7:00 p.m. at Minnetrista. Chapter business will begin at 7:15, and Angie's program will get underway at 7:30.



June 13

Wet-Footed South African Birds



An African kingfisher

William P. Mahoney will take us to South Africa through photos taken by his son Michael. According to Bill, Michael has a goal of seeing and photographing as much of this world as he can before he runs out of money or life energy... whichever comes first. Michael's interest in photographing places,

people, and vistas stretches to include nature in the many places he visits. Bill edits these photos from faraway places – more than 3,000 to date.

The **June 13** presentation will display a select few of the South African birds (swimmers and waders) that either had their feet wet or were drying them in front of Michael's camera. Bill will lead the group as we attempt to compare unfamiliar birds with ones found in our bird guides.

Time to socialize will begin at 7:00 p.m. at Minnetrista. Chapter business will begin at 7:15, and Bill's program will get underway shortly after 7:30.

Upcoming Field Trips and Work Day

April 30

TogetherGreen Work Day



Now that spring is here, workdays at the Hughes Nature Preserve will get underway once again! On Saturday, April 30, we'll **meet at noon** at the Cardinal Greenway Depot, on Wysor St. in Muncie, and walk to the work site. If you arrive later, don't worry: we'll have someone posted who can point you in the right direction.

Be sure to bring water, and while tools and gloves will be provided, please feel free to bring your own if you like. Extra shovels always come in handy.

If you have any questions, contact Tom Reeve at blueashconsulting@gmail.com.

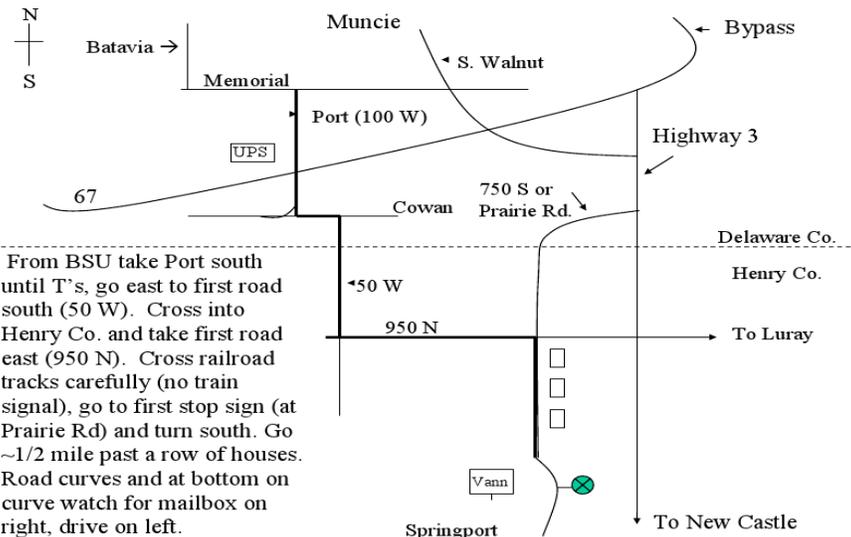
May 1 - new date!

Spring Wildflower Tour

On **Sunday, May 1**, at **1 pm**, we will take a spring wildflower tour on Carolyn and John Vanns' property, just outside of Springport. (See map below or visit ww.cooperaudubon.org.)

In addition to looking for wildflowers on their wonderfully diverse acreage that includes woods and prairie, we'll also do some birding, so be sure to bring your binoculars and field guides. Wear footwear that's appropriate for light hiking.

Carpoolers will leave from the Cooper Science parking lot (Ball State campus) at **12:15 pm**. (See our website for a map.)



May 14

May Bird Count

The big May Day Bird Count is scheduled this year for May 14. To learn more, visit the Indiana Audubon Society website, at www.indianaudubon.org.

To participate, or to ask questions, contact Jay Bolden, at jay_bolden@hotmail.com or 317-885-8030.

May 7-8

Overnight field trip -
reserve your room today!

Magee Marsh & Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge

Don't miss your chance to experience one of the very best birding sites in all of North America!



Warblers abound at Magee Marsh

On **Sat., May 7**, we will take an overnight birding trip to Magee

Marsh (formerly Crane Creek) and Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, on Lake Erie in Ohio, to observe warblers and other spring migrants. We will leave around 7:30 a.m. on Saturday and return Sunday afternoon.

We have reserved the Railroad Depot Bed & Breakfast in Oregon, Ohio, on May 7, at a rate of \$100/room, plus tax. One of the rooms may be set up for multiple singles if traveling alone. Only a couple rooms are still available, so book yours right away!

The innkeeper is encouraging guests to book an extra night (Friday or Sunday) if desired. Cancellations must be 30 days in advance. When booking, be sure to say you are with the Robert Cooper Audubon Society of Muncie, Indiana.

Booking information:

Railroad Depot Bed & Breakfast
5331 Cedar Point Rd.
Oregon, OH 43616
(888) 690-7137 /
www.bbrailroad.com

Other hotel option:

Holiday Inn Express
3154 Navarre Ave.
Oregon, OH 43616
(419) 691-8800

If you have questions, contact Sarah McKillip, Field Trip Coordinator, at smregister@bsu.edu or 287-8464.

May/June Bird of the Month: Magnolia Warbler

Magnolia Warbler:
Dendroica tigrina

By Helen Twibell



The magnolia warbler is a small 5-inch yellow and black bird with white eyebrow and gray crown. It has a white wing patch and yellow

rump with obvious white patches on the tail. Also it has heavy black streaks on the chest.

The little yellow and black warbler is one of the most common warblers in Indiana during spring (mid-May) and fall (late-August) migrations. During these seasons, one would look for them low in trees, where they feed on insects, their main food. They often fan their tails while picking insects from the underside of leaves. Males often feed

higher up in trees than females.

There are more of these warblers in Indiana in the spring migration, and when they arrive, the trees seem to be filled with the colorful birds.

The warblers winter in the tropics in Central America. When the magnolia warblers finally pass through Indiana on their way to breeding grounds, they go on to nest in Canada and the northern states. Also some nest down through the Appalachian Mt. region. They make nests in open stands of young hemlock, spruce and fir, or balsam. During migration, though, they land almost anywhere there are shrubs or trees.

This beautiful warbler got its name from the first specimen collected by the famous ornithologist Alexander Wilson. He found it in among some magnolia trees in Mississippi in the early 1990's. Eventually "~~m~~magnolia warbler," being a

pretty way of referring to an attractive bird, became the common name. One authority remarked that if the warbler had to be named after a tree, spruce or balsam would have been more appropriate for this northern forest bird.

On the northern breeding grounds the nests may be in spruce, fir or hemlock at almost any height but generally from 5 to 15 feet up. The loosely constructed shallow nest is made of twigs, plant stems and grass and lined with black rootlets. The four white eggs are spotted or splotched with brown. The female incubates them for 11 to 13 days. Both the female and male feed the young.

The song is a rising ~~w~~w-e-e-t-a—w-e-e-t-a—w-e-e—t-e-e.” It is often sung from the tip of a tall spruce tree.



TogetherGreen: Update from Tom Reeve, project manager

Boy, what a nasty winter we had. Usually you can count on a month of work days in the winter. This year I think I counted about a week's worth.

Because of this, the TogetherGreen project on the Cardinal

Greenway and at Hughes Nature Preserve is moving along slowly. We have made some major progress, but much needs to be done. We have successfully cut down about a third to a half of the total honeysuckle. You can really see the difference now that they are starting to leaf out. This means that at a minimum, we need to double the amount of work we have put in. We really could use your help.

On Saturday, April 9th, we had Boy Scout Troop 69 out of Yorktown out to work on Grant Stewart's Eagle Scout Project. Thirteen scouts and seven parents showed up to work on Grant's adopted section. They were able to remove approximately 1/2 acre of honeysuckle and stack it along the greenway. They also removed the old fence that made ingress and egress into

Hughes difficult. They are not done, though; Grant will lead a tree planting in their section on April 23.

We are looking for dedicated people to join our restoration efforts. From now until

June 10, we will

be working off and on at the site. We are also looking for large groups of people to come out and really make a huge impact on the site. Below is my contact information as Project Manager for the TogetherGreen grant. At the top right is a website address for the calendar of workdays and a listing of planting events at the site. (If you are interested in helping, but cannot do so on the scheduled days, please contact me and I will gladly work with you.)

blueashconsulting@gmail.com / 765-216-5866

Website for calendar

[http://blueashconsulting.com/
togethergreen-events-calendar/](http://blueashconsulting.com/togethergreen-events-calendar/)

Calendar of Planting Events

4/23, 12-5 pm – Grant Stewart's

Eagle Scout tree planting

4/30, 12-5 pm – Tree planting
event for the community

6/11, 9 am - 2 pm – Final tree
planting

Spring Birding Extravaganza! Continued from page 1

Admission for Audubon members and Minnetrista members is **FREE**. Just tell the receptionist that you're an Audubon member. All others pay the regular Minnetrista admission fee of \$5.



A free chokecherry sapling for every participant! Great door prizes to the day's best students!

an amazing opportunity to move up to the next level of bird appreciation! Be sure

to tell your friends, neighbors, and co-workers! Children are welcomed!

Questions? Contact Barb Stedman (288-2890 or bastedman@gmail.com) or Sarah McKillip (smregister@bsu.edu or 287-8464).

Bring your binoculars and bird field guides! You'll need both for the bird walk. If you have extra binoculars that others could use, please bring them to share. But be sure to mark your name on them!

Schedule of Events

9 am - 12 pm: Birding 101

Learn the basic features to look for when identifying birds: size, body shape, bill shape, eye stripes, wing bars, behavior, etc. Participants will handle field study skins – a fundamental tool for ornithology students – in order to examine distinguishing field marks of dozens of common species in our area. You'll also learn some birding field techniques. (Led by Dr. Ron Weiss, ornithologist and director of Chipperwoods Bird Observatory in Indianapolis.)

12-1 pm: Brown bag mini-presentations

Bring a sack lunch and a container for your beverage (water and coffee will be available), and while you eat, you can learn how to select binoculars and spotting scopes. (Led by Todd Smith, of Jack's Camera.) We'll also have a selection of birding field guides for you to peruse.

1-2 pm: Birding by ear

Birders need to use their ears, not just their eyes, when identifying birds. Learn how to discern the songs and calls of some of the most common birds in your back yard. (Led by Ron Weiss.)

2-2:30 pm: Bird-banding demonstration

Learn how and why birds are banded. (Demonstration by Ron Weiss.)

2:30-3:30 pm: Bird walk

Conclude the day by putting your new bird identification skills to the test! Small groups, led by experienced birders, will look and listen for birds on the Minnetrista grounds and at Christy Woods.

See you in the fall....

The *Chat* is going on summer vacation for July and August but will resume with the September issue. Likewise, our chapter meetings will be on hiatus during July and August but will be back in action for the annual fall picnic on Sunday, September 11.

To stay informed about RCAS events over the summer, remember to visit our chapter website, at www.cooperaudubon.org. Better yet, **send a note to cooperaudubon@gmail.com** to receive email notices about upcoming events.

Living Lightly Fair, Sept. 10

Coming to the **Living Lightly Fair** Sept. 10, at Minnetrista: Stephanie Soechtig, one

of the creators of *Tapped*, a film that explores the many problems generated by bottled water.

Living Living offers visitors practical ideas and inspiration for living more sustainably.

Visit www.livinglightlyfair.org this summer for the full schedule.



Environmentally & socially conscientious investing

In an effort to be good stewards of our chapter's funds and be true to our environmental ethics, the board recently voted to invest a portion of our savings through L.B. Stant (www.lbstant.com), an investment firm in Nashville, Indiana. Bill Stant, owner of the firm, which specializes in SRI (Socially Responsible Investing), was a speaker at last year's Living Lightly Fair.

Bill asks us to note that any ~~investing~~ investing, including SRI, involves risk, including possible loss of principal. Past performance neither guarantees, nor necessarily indicates, future returns."

Board Elections

Be sure to attend our June 13 meeting, when we'll vote on the following slate of officers and directors for the coming Audubon year (which runs from July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2012):

Co-presidents: **Jon Creek and Sarah McKillip**

- Jon has served as Vice-President for the last three years and as Conservation Chair before that. He has led many of our chapter's major conservation initiatives over the last several years.
- Sarah has served as Field Trip Chair for the last two years and has kept our members busy each spring through fall with a full slate of field trip activities.

Treasurer: **Nona Nunnely**

- Nona is returning for her third year as Treasurer, keeping our chapter finances in order and accountable to the National Audubon Society, our membership, and the IRS.

Recording Secretary: **Barb Hesselgrave**

- Barb is returning for her third consecutive year as Recording Secretary - a role she has filled at other times over the last 15+ years, in addition to serving an extended term as Treasurer.

Directors, 2011-13: **Joel Jeffcoat and Phil Tuttle**

- Both Joel and Phil are completing two-year terms and have happily agreed to return for a second term.

Next year's board will also include Frank Meeker and Dave Cramer (who will be completing the second year of their two-year terms as Directors), and various committee chairs, who will be announced in the August/September *Chat*.

Garden Fair Volunteers Needed

We're looking for volunteers to help staff our Audubon table at this year's Garden Fair, at Minnetrista.

The Garden Fair runs from **8 a.m.- 4 p.m. on Saturday, June 4**, and **10 a.m.- 3 p.m. on Sunday, June 5**. Please contact Barb Stedman at 765-288-2890 or bastedman@gmail.com if you're willing to help for a two-hour shift either day.

Be sure to visit the Fair, which will include a full week-end of plants to peruse and buy, demonstrations, refreshments, and more. See www.minnetrista.net for details.

Thank You *from Barb Stedman*

As I conclude my third term as president, I want to thank all of the many individuals who've given their time and energy to keep our chapter running smoothly over the past year and, in most cases, much longer. You can see the names of many of those individuals on the back of each issue of the *Chat* – **board members** who've organized monthly programs, field trips, special events, conservation projects, communication with the community and with one another, hospitality, and much, much more.

To all of those board members who've served over the past two years I want to give my sincere thanks for contributing their time, ideas, and commitment to the work of our chapter and to the community that is *Audubon*.

But that list doesn't tell the whole

story. There are many other volunteers who've stepped forward on a regular basis to serve our chapter:

- **Jane Duckworth, Lis Mitchell, and Martha Hunt**, who've been responsible for processing and mailing the printed *Chat* for several years
- **Jeff Ray and Bill Grummer**, who've worked tirelessly with our VP and Conservation Chair on native species eradication projects
- **Bill Grummer** (again!), who has taken charge of our annual bird count and Breeding Bird Atlas duties
- **Tom Reeve**, who has served as Project Director for our Together-Green work along the Cardinal Greenway in the past year
- **Marcia Johnson, Lis & Paul Mitchell**, and other volunteers at our Garden Fair booth each year

These are just a few of the individuals whose contributions have kept this chapter rolling along.

We have a vibrant, active chapter that is doing incredibly important work in the community. I hope you, too, will express your appreciation to everyone who has made that work possible.

More important, I hope you'll finally take the all-important step of getting involved with our chapter in the coming year. If you've never been to a chapter event, start now: come to our Spring Birding Extravaganza, field trip, or monthly meeting. Donate a couple hours of your time to one of our next work days or volunteer events. We'd love to get to know more of our "urkers"!

Thank you for allowing me to serve our chapter. I'm excited to see where the next year takes us!

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

- April 23:** Spring Birding Extravaganza!
April 30: TogetherGreen work day
May 1 Spring wildflower tour
May 7-8: Overnight field trip to Magee Marsh
May 9: —Wildflowers of Mounds State Park”
May 14: May Day Bird Count
June 4 & 5: Minnetrista Garden Fair
June 11: TogetherGreen work day
June 13: —Wt-footed South African Birds”
Sept. 10: Living Lightly Fair
Sept. 11: Fall picnic

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 Cultural Center
1200 N. Minnetrista Parkway
Muncie, IN



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

Officers

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

Directors

2009-2011	Joel Jeffcoat	286-2896
	Phil Tuttle	289-4251
2010-2012	Dave Cramer	260-726-9492
	Frank Meeker	289-5635

Committee Chairs

Conservation:	Charlie Mason	288-9937
Education:	Amy Mansfield	749-4003
Field Trip:	Sarah McKillip	287-8464
Hospitality:	Doris Cheney	288-0981
Membership:	Martha Hunt	212-6873
Newsletter Ed.	Meredith Sims	317-640-8205
Program:	Lois Rockhill	287-8698
Publicity:	Amy Mansfield	749-4003