

The Chat



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

Volume 38, No. 3

May/June 2012

May 14, 7 p.m.

Local Water Quality and Prairie Creek Reservoir

Join us on May 14 to find out about water quality issues at our local reservoir and about water quality in general. Dr. Jarka Popovicova, Associate Professor of Natural Resources and Environmental Management at Ball State University, will discuss the status of the reservoir water quality, any changes that have occurred, and the factors that affect it.



Whether you own property on any lakeshore, live in the vicinity of a body of water, or just have questions about the water quality of your pond, lake, or your tap water, this program is for you.

Chapter business will begin at **7 pm at Kennedy Library**. Jarka's program will get underway at 7:15.

June 11, 7 p.m.

Bird Movie Night

We'll be watching The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's *Our Favorite Birds*, which is a beautiful presentation of the Lab members' favorite birds.

Additionally, we will enjoy footage from Audubon member Marcia Johnson and her trip to Antarctica, followed by questions and answers.

Please contact Jen at Jrwagner7@gmail.com if you would also like to share a unique experience with a particular bird species at this program.

Chapter business and refreshments will begin at **7 pm at Kennedy Library**, followed by the program at 7:15.



Chapter Leader Elections

Be sure to attend our June 11 meeting, when we'll vote on the following slate of officers and directors for the coming Audubon year (July 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013):

Treasurer: Robert Williams

- Robert Williams has accepted the nomination for treasurer, following Nona Nunnelly's wonderful work to keep our chapter finances on track and financially accountable to the National Audubon Society, our membership, and the IRS. Robert has been an active member of RCAS for the past two years.

Recording Secretary: Jen Wagner

- Jen has been serving as our secretary since last fall. This will be Jen's second year with RCAS. She also serves as our program chair.

Directors, 2012-14: Dave Cramer and Willy De Smet

- Willy De Smet joined our board as an interim director, finishing out Frank Meeker's term, which ends June 30, 2012. He has agreed to a two-year term for the 2012-2014 directorship. Dave is completing a two-year term and has agreed to serve an additional term for 2012-2014.

Next year's board will also include Joel Jeffcoat and Phil Tuttle (who are completing the first year of their two-year terms as directors) and various committee chairs, who will be announced in the September/October Chat.

Upcoming Field Trips

April 28: Fox Island

Fox Island is a 605-acre park in Allen County; 270 acres are a State Nature Preserve. The park has a variety of different habitats, including a marsh, seasonal ponds, a wetland forest, and even a dune!

On Sat., April, 28, Jim Haw will lead us on a joint field trip with the Stockbridge Audubon chapter. Meet at Fox Island at the Bird Observation Bldg. parking lot at **8 am**. Please note there is a \$2 entrance fee.

Carpoolers from Muncie will meet at **6:30 am** at the Cooper Science parking lot on Ball State's campus.

To get there on your own: Take I-69 north to exit 99 – Lower Huntington Rd. toward the airport expressway. Turn right onto Lower Huntington Rd., then take the first left to *stay* on Lower Huntington Rd. Take the second left onto Branstrator Rd. Turn right onto Yohne Rd. Fox Island, at 7324 Yohne, is on the left.

After you enter the park, go straight through a 4-way stop just inside the gatehouse and continue to the end of the road. Turn left into the parking lot/meeting house.

May 12: Loblolly Marsh Wetland Preserve

On Sat., May 12, we'll take a birding tour of the Loblolly Marsh, part of the famous Limberlost Swamp in Adams and Jay Counties that fascinated author Gene Stratton-Porter.

We'll meet Bill Hubbard, Limberlost naturalist, at **9 am** at the pavilion on Jay County Rd 250 W.

Carpoolers from Muncie will leave from the Cooper Science parking lot, on the Ball State campus, at **8 am**.

To get there on your own: Loblolly Marsh is just west of Bryant, which is located at the junction of State Rds. 67 and 18 in Jay Co. From Muncie, take State Rd. 67 north, all the way to Bryant. (Watch for a left turn on 67 in Portland.)

In Bryant, go west on State Rd. 18 for about three miles, to County Rd. 250W, and look for Loblolly Marsh signs pointing to the right (north). Go north on 250W about half a mile, and you'll see the parking lot and new pavilion on the left.



Great Egrets at the Loblolly Marsh

May 19: Wildflower hike at Ginn Woods

On Sat., May 19, naturalist John Taylor will lead us on a hike through Ginn Woods in northern Delaware County. This 161-acre property is the second largest stand of old-growth forest remaining in Indiana, and it has an uncommon diversity of plants and animals.

We'll gather at **10 am** at the Cooper Science parking lot on Ball State's campus. John has stipulated that we must all carpool as the woods has no parking.

June 9: Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary

On Sat., June 9, we'll spend the morning at Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary, just outside of Connersville. The sanctuary's 700+ acres, covered with forest, meadows, and ponds, are owned and managed by the Indiana Audubon Society for the sake of both birds and bird-lovers.

We'll meet at about **8:40 am** at the Sanctuary, do some birding, and maybe hike the Fern Trail. We'll picnic at the Sanctuary before heading back home, so bring a drink and dish for yourself and perhaps something to share.

Carpoolers will leave from Cooper Science parking lot on Ball State's campus at **7 am**.

To get there on your own: From Muncie, take US 35 southeast about 14 miles to State Rd. 1, and turn right (south).

Follow S.R. 1 to Connersville, where you'll pick up State Rd. 121 south. (S.R. 1 will become Western Ave. as you approach Connersville. Following 1, take a slight right onto W 8th St. and then

continue onto N. Grand Ave.)

Continue south on State Rd. 121 to W. County Rd. 350 S., where you'll turn right and travel about 3.4 miles. The sanctuary is located at 3499 S. Bird Sanctuary Rd., Connersville.

Estimated time from Muncie is 1 hour 36 minutes.

Rose Jeffery, Field Trip Chair:
rosemariejeffery@gmail.com; 765-716-0299

Summer field trips - TBA

This summer we'll visit the **Cooper Prairie** (just west of Muncie, off Bethel Ave.) to experience peak summer prairie forbs and grasses.

Then, in late August, we'll take a tour of the **Herbert Davis Forestry Farm** in Randolph County.

Check our website (www.cooperaudubon.org) and Facebook page this summer for details, as they become available. Or send your email address to cooperaudubon@gmail.com to receive updates and reminders.

Garden Fair volunteers needed

We're looking for volunteers to help staff our Audubon table at this year's Garden Fair at Minnetrista. The fair runs from 8 am to 4 pm on **Sat., June 2**, and 10 am to 3 p.m. on **Sun., June 3**.

Please contact Sarah McKillip at 287-8464 or smregister@bsu.edu if you're willing to help for a two-hour shift either day. We'll be selling birdseed at our booth this year.

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

Living Lightly 2012

Mark your calendar for the Living Lightly Fair on **Sept. 15**, at Minnetrista! You'll have the chance to learn more about sustainable living, browse the Green Marketplace, hear great music, eat wonderful food, and let your children enjoy activities just for them!

Visit www.livinglightlyfair.org this summer for more information.



Chimney swift towers

Our chapter is working with the students of the Marine Corps Junior ROTC at Muncie's Southside High School to build and put up chimney swift towers.

With the increasing loss of chimneys for both nesting and roosting, constructed towers play a more important role than ever for these fascinating little birds.

Details and photos will follow this fall.

May Day Bird Count

The big May Day Bird Count will take place **May 12**. To learn more, visit www.indianaudubon.org.

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

IU Ball Memorial Hospital agrees to turn off bird recording

By Sarah R. McKillip, RCAS co-president

On Apr. 17, Dr. Kamal Islam (Ball State ornithology professor) and I met with the facilities manager at IU Ball Memorial Hospital to discuss the bird recordings broadcast from the hospital grounds.

Over a decade ago, the recordings were used to scare large flocks of crows from the parking lots and surrounding structures. Since that time, the crows have dissipated, but the recordings continued, to the detriment of raptors living in nearby Christy Woods. Also, the hospital began receiving complaints from patients, who were able to hear the recordings well into the night.

Andy Raih, the new facilities manager, observed that crows and other large flocks of birds haven't been a problem recently. He graciously agrees to completely turn off the recording and to consult RCAS should future issues arise.

We were also able to provide Mr. Raih with more effective ways of broadcasting the recordings if necessary. These include short-term intervals and randomized broadcasts, to prevent birds from becoming desensitized to the sound.

A big "thank you" goes out to Mr. Raih and IU Ball Memorial for taking steps to ensure the health and well-being of our local raptors and citizens.

Children's education activities

RCAS Education Chair Deborah Brown has made great progress reaching out to young people and educating them on the importance of birds and other wildlife.

She has already enrolled more than 10 children in the RCAS Jr. Audubon Society, for which they receive a certificate and issues of the *Tweet*.

On May 5 she'll attend the Delaware County Master Gardeners Day Camp, called "Bat, Birds and Butterflies," where she'll discuss birds with children ages 5-11 and also tell them how our Audubon Society works to protect native bird species.

See you in the fall....

The *Chat* is going on summer vacation but will resume with the Sept./Oct. issue. Likewise, our chapter meetings will be on hiatus during July and August but will be back in action for the fall picnic on Sun., Sept. 9.

To stay informed about RCAS activities over the summer, remember to visit our chapter website, at www.cooperaudubon.org, or our Facebook page (search for "Robert Cooper Audubon Society"). Better yet, **send a note to cooperaudubon@gmail.com** to receive email notices about upcoming events.

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 28:** Fox Island field trip
- May 12:** Loblolly field trip, May Day Bird Count
- May 14:** Water quality & Prairie Creek program
- May 19:** Wildflower hike at Ginn Woods
- June 2 & 3:** Garden Fair
- June 9:** Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary field trip
- June 11:** Bird movie night

Chapter Website: www.cooperaudubon.org
Email: cooperaudubon@gmail.com

Meetings

Program meetings are held on the second Monday of each month (except July, August, & September) at the

Muncie Public Library Kennedy Branch
1700 W. McGalliard Rd.
Muncie, IN

7:00 p.m.: Chapter Business

7:15 p.m.: Scheduled Program



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Officers

- Co-Presidents: Sarah McKillip 287-8464
Jon Creek 348-4019
- Recording Sec.: Jennifer Wagner 845-536-3285
- Treasurer: Nona Nunnely 284-0751

Directors

- 2010-2012: Dave Cramer 260-726-9492
Willy De Smet 260-726-6693
- 2011-2013: Joel Jeffcoat 286-2896
Phil Tuttle 289-4251

Committee Chairs

- Conservation: Charlie Mason 288-9937
- Education: Deborah Brown 747-9332
- Field Trip: Rose Jeffery 716-0299
- Hospitality: Doris Cheney 288-0981
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