



Cooper's Talk

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

Volume 42, No. 2
March / April 2018

Trip of a Lifetime: Birding and Sightseeing from Indiana to the Alaskan Arctic and Back

Wednesday, March 21, 7 p.m.



Erv and Lois Rockhill left Anderson on May 31, 2017, drove through Canada via the Alaska Highway to Dawson Creek, British Columbia, where they caught the Top of the World Highway, and then entered Alaska on June 23rd, after which they toured around the state for two months driving into the Arctic as far as Deadhorse (Prudhoe Bay). They also visited Chicken, Fairbanks, Anchorage, Denali, Chitina, Delta Junction, Seward, Homer, and places in-between. They boarded an overnight ferry in Haines, Alaska that delivered them to Prince Rupert, British Columbia on August 25th and pulled back into Anderson on Sept 18th, having driven 13,640 miles round trip. They towed a camper and enjoyed many state, provincial, and national parks, as well as other federal lands and a few county and city parks as well.

Erv and Lois Rockhill are both graduates of Anderson College (now Anderson University). Together they served two years in Peace Corps Turkey, three years as house parents/social worker/accountant at Hope Hill Children's Home in Kentucky, raised three children and fostered another. Erv earned his CPA license shortly after college and later completed his MBA at BSU. Over his long career, he has worked in a prestigious CPA firm, taught accounting, worked in health care, a publishing company, and started a lawn-care business. He continues to work for a CPA firm during tax season. Lois received her MA at Goddard College in Vermont. Having worked as a social worker and hospital chaplain, Lois retired from a 23-year career as Executive Director of the Second Harvest Food Bank of East Central Indiana. Since then she has been a Learning Coach for her grandson who is enrolled in Indiana Connections Academy, an on-line public school. Both Lois and Erv are involved in supporting peace and justice issues as well as environmental concerns. Birding has become a mutual love. They enjoy traveling and have spent the past five years driving throughout the USA and Canada with their travel trailer in tow.

RCAS programs are held at the **Kennedy Branch** of the Muncie Public Library. Chapter business and refreshments start at 7:00 p.m. with the program beginning at 7:15 p.m.

Upcoming Events & Trips

Mounds State Park Bird Hike

Saturday, March 31 & April 28, 9 a.m.

Our monthly bird hike will be held on the last Saturday of February. Meet at the visitor center at 9 a.m. We will provide binoculars and a scope. The hike ends with a review of which species we recorded. Birders of all skill levels are invited and children are encouraged to join us!

Wilbur Wright Trail and Summit Lake

Saturday, March 17 at 9:00 a.m.

Join us to bird the trail along the Big Blue River and into the Wilbur Wright Fish and Wildlife Area before heading to Summit Lake. Meet at the Wilbur Wright FWA parking lot at SR 103 near CR 150 at 9:00 a.m. Parking is limited so carpooling is encouraged. Carpoolers will leave from Cooper Science parking lot at 8:20 a.m.

Eagle Creek

Sunday, April 8 at 9:00 a.m.

Join members of the Amos Butler Audubon Society on their weekly Eagle Creek bird hike from 9 to 11 a.m. Gather at the **Ornithology Center** located inside the park. There is a \$6 fee per car. Carpoolers will leave from Cooper Science parking lot at 7:40 a.m. The Eagle Creek Ornithology Center is located at 6515 Delong Rd, Indianapolis, IN 46278.

White River Trail & Edgewater Park - Anderson

Saturday, April 21 at 9:00 a.m.

Lois Rockhill will lead the bird hike along the White River trail at Edgewater Park in Anderson. RCAS will co-host this hike with the Mounds Greenway and Hoosier Environmental Council. The bird hike will begin at 9:00 a.m. Carpoolers will leave from Cooper Science parking lot at 8:30 a.m.

Pollinators and Their Plant Relationships - Cheryl LeBlanc

Wednesday, April 18

Using general concept of plant-insect interactions, we will explore various plant characteristics and their pollinators and why they are important in all ecosystems around the world. Orchids and native plants will be our models.

Cheryl LeBlanc received her BS (1985) and MS (1988) in Plant Ecology from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse, NY completing a thesis titled "Vegetation Dynamics in a Central New York Shrub-Carr, 94 Years After Fire." She was employed with IDNR Division of Nature Preserves from 1987 - 1991 as a plant ecologist. She 'met' her first orchid in her backyard, at the age of 9. Since 1993, LeBlanc has been employed at Ball State as curator of Wheeler-Thanhauser Orchid Collection and Species Bank and plant ecologist. Her focus is nature education and plant ecology, including plant-insect interactions, for which she uses orchids as prime examples. As an artist and biological illustrator, Cheryl celebrates nature and nature education through her work.

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Community Happenings

Do you know a middle-school-aged kid who likes to explore nature?
Let them know about the Wildlife Warriors!



Red-tail Land Conservancy, in collaboration with Ball State University has started a new nature club for youth aged 10-15. The club explores nature with experts in field biology and conservation, along with designated Fun Consultant and local young conservationist, Logan Carter.

Wildlife Warriors meet on the second Wednesday of each month from 6:30-8:00 in Cooper Life Science room 230. At the next meeting, on March 14, participants will learn about and examine up-close secretive salamanders. For more information visit www.fortheland.org/wildlife-warriors or email Julie Borgmann at julie@fortheland.org!

Ohio Valley Birding Festival April 20-22 & May 4-6

The Ohio Valley Birding Festival is an Evansville Audubon Society event featuring guided hikes in southwestern IN and western KY along with family-friendly birding activities at John James Audubon Park. Many of the hikes are free! Visit www.ohiovalleybirdingfestival.org for more information!



Songbird Banding Demonstrations This Spring!

Ball State University's Cerulean Warbler Research Lab will continue its banding demonstrations this spring! All are welcome to come and watch the entire process of banding songbirds and learn about why this practice is important for bird conservation. Bird banding will occur Tuesdays from 7:00 to 11:00 a.m. at Cooper Farm. Banding is weather dependent and will not occur in rain or winds above 14 mph. For questions or more information, contact Clay Delancey at cddelancey@bsu.edu.





Robert Cooper
Audubon Society

P.O. Box 1635
Muncie, IN 47308

Dates for Your Calendar

March 17: Field Trip - Wilbur Wright
 March 21: Monthly Program - The Rockhills
 March 31: Mounds SP Bird Hike
 April 8: Field Trip - Eagle Creek
 April 18: Monthly Program - Cheryl LeBlanc
 April 21: Field Trip - White River Trail
 April 28: Field Trip - Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary
 April 28: Mounds SP Bird Hike

Chapter Website: www.cooperaudubon.org
 Find us on Facebook!
 Email: admin@cooperaudubon.org

Program meetings are held every month except
 July, August, and September at
Muncie Public Library, Kennedy Branch
 1700 W McGalliard Rd, Muncie, IN
 7:00 pm: chapter business & refreshments
 7:15 pm: scheduled program

Cooper's Talk is published 5 times a year by the
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 Randolph Counties.

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