



Cooper's Talk

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

Volume 41, No.4

Sept/Oct 2015

Bats of Indiana – Ryan Slack

Wednesday, October 14, 7 p.m.

Learn more about the flying mammals of the night in this informative presentation focusing on bat species in our own backyards. **Biologist Ryan Slack** will cover a variety of topics about bats, including myths and why they're not true, specialized adaptations, anatomy and classification, habitats, conservation, white nose syndrome, the latest in the study of bat calls, the truth about bats and rabies, and an in-depth look at the 12 species of bats found in Indiana.



Join us for our annual picnic!



On Sunday, September 13, our annual fall picnic will take place at Mounds State Park's "Friendship Shelter" from 1-4 p.m.

Please bring (1) a hot or cold dish, salad, or dessert to share and (2) your own tableware. Audubon will provide hamburger/vegetarian burgers and drinks. (The meat will be free-range, all natural).

Afterwards, we'll have the opportunity to enjoy a bird walk/hike to the historic Mounds and a beautiful stretch of the White River, or tour the historic Bronnenberg Home (open until 4 pm).

Don't forget your binoculars! Note: The pool is closed for the season.

There is an entrance fee of \$7 per in-state car. Mounds State Park is at 4306 Mounds Rd./State Rd. 232, in Anderson, off E County Rd. 67 via S CR 300 E.

Upcoming Events

Living Lightly Fair

Saturday, September 19 from 9-4



The free event features speakers, kids' activities, live music, food demonstrations, a green marketplace of 50+ vendors, the opportunity to test drive a hybrid car, and expired medication drop-off. Food will be available for purchase from Payne's Restaurant.

Featured speaker topics include Sustainable Storytelling, the Muncie Maker Hub, the Mounds Lake proposal, sustainable burial practices, the Motivate Our Minds urban gardening program, solar power, zero net energy homes, and Kill-A-Watt energy meter check-out in Muncie Public Libraries. Guests can also view "The Greening of Middletown" social media videos, produced by Ball State students, and take part in a yoga session.

For a full event schedule, visit www.livinglightlyfair.org.

Fox Island County Park

Saturday, September 26

Fox Island is a 605-acre park; 270 acres are a State Nature Preserve. The park has a number of habitats, including a marsh, seasonal ponds, a wetland forest, and even a dune. We will gather at 8:30 a.m. at the **Bird Observation Building** parking lot. There is an entrance fee of \$7 a car.

Directions from Muncie: take I-69 north to exit 299. Merge onto Lower Huntington Road. Stay on Lower Huntington. Take a left onto Branstrator Rd., and then turn right onto Yohne Rd. Fox Island is at 7324 Yohne Rd. It will be on the left.

Go to the Bird Observation Building. Travel from Muncie will take about 1 ½ hours.

Indiana Audubon Fall Festival

October 2-4

This is a great opportunity to meet birders from around the state and learn more about birding! Speakers include Kamal Islam and there are excellent field trips Saturday and Sunday! For the full agenda, visit indianaudubon.org.

Salamonie Reservoir

Saturday, October 17

We will meet at the **Hominy Ridge Picnic area** in the Salamonie River State Forest at 8:30 a.m. We will bird in the forest in the morning, then break for a picnic lunch. In the afternoon we will check areas around the reservoir and the visitor center.

Directions: Take I-69 N to IN 218 toward Van Buren/ Warren/Berne. Turn left onto N-218. Turn right on IN-105. Turn left onto IN-124. Turn right onto 600-East. Take a left onto 250 South. Turn right onto Dam Road. Take Pefley Road into the Salamonie River State Forest.

Mounds State Park

Sunday, September 27 & October 25

Monthly Mounds State Park hikes will continue on the **last Sunday of the month**. Meet at the **Visitor Center at 9 a.m.** We will provide binoculars and a scope. The hike ends with cookies!

Jeff Riegel: Bird Research in the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (HEE)

Wednesday, December 9, 7 p.m. at Kennedy Library

HEE Field Supervisor and Indiana birder extraordinaire, Jeff Riegel, will speak about the various bird-related projects that take place in the HEE. Jeff is in charge of all of the "core" projects within the HEE; in addition to birds, he oversees salamander research, mast and overstory vegetation surveys, and invertebrate sampling that occur throughout the year.

Fall Awards Banquet: Send us your nominations!

Monday, November 16, 6-8 p.m.

Unitarian Universalist Church, Muncie, IN

Please join us on Monday, November 16 for our fall awards banquet! The banquet will honor individuals and organizations that have made noteworthy contributions to the environment in our region in these categories:

Robert H. and Esther (Munro) Cooper Conservation Award: the chapter's highest honor, for overall contributions to, conservation of, and appreciation for, the natural environment.

Phyllis Yuhas Wildlife Habitat Preservation Award: for development or preservation of habitat that contains significant wildlife and/or native plant life populations .

Richard Greene Public Service Award: for active involvement in serving the public's environmental interests and concerns.

Clyde W. Hibbs Conservation Education Award: for excellence in educating the area's children, youth, and /or adults on conservation issues and practices

Charles Wise Youth Conservation Award: for excellence in conservation practices by a youth under age 18.

To make the event a success, we need your help. If you know of an organization or individual who

deserves recognition for his or her service in any of these categories, please send your nomination, along with a description of the nominee and his or her contact information, to Sarah McKillip at sarahrmckillip@gmail.com. Nominations must be received by Oct. 30. Be sure to include your own name, phone number, address, and email address. Award nominees need not reside in our chapter's seven-county region or be affiliated with the Audubon Society. A list of past recipients is linked from our website at the bottom of the "Monthly Programs" page.

A new look for our chapter!

You may have noticed we have a new logo and new newsletter name! For a dozen years our logo was a Carolina Wren drawing created by art professor Sally Myers, and our newsletter was named the *Chat*.

But now we're beginning a new era with a Cooper's Hawk logo created by BSU student Shelbie Freeman, who interned for our chapter over the summer. (Shelbie also created our new chapter website.) The new title of our newsletter is *Cooper's Talk*, coined by new board member Sarah Fischer.

Thanks to Shelbie and Sarah for their creative talents!



Welcome to our new board members!



Though relatively new to birding, **Kim McKenzie** has spent a lifetime marveling at the wonders of nature. She grew up in Muncie, enjoying fishing in the White and Mississinewa rivers, hiking at Mounds SP, ice fishing and cross-country skiing, biking around the reservoir, and camping. She has a background of archaeology & history, environmental sciences, outdoor recreation, and land surveying. She brings to the board enthusiasm, a conservation ethic, and a desire to encourage and share nature with new people.



Sarah Fischer is a double major in biology and print-making at Ball State. She aspires to be both an ornithologist and artist. She hopes to create public-accessible artwork based on her research.

Hailing from the streets of Anderson, IN, **Micayla Jones** is a Ball State grad who now works for Red-tail Land Conservancy. In her down time, Micayla likes to prepare bird specimens for Ball State's research collection.

2016 RCAS Costa Rica Rainforest Birding Tour

March 5-13, 2016



Discover the fascinating bird, animal, and plant life of the Caribbean lowlands, Braulio Carrillo National Park, the cloud forest, the Páramo (unique high-elevation ecosystem), the Pacific mid-elevation forest, and the Pacific lowlands. We will look for the Resplendent Quetzal in the cloud forest of San Gerardo de Dota. See the actively erupting volcano Arenal, relax at a hot springs, and visit a local farm to learn how cacao is grown and made into chocolate. Experience the natural beauty, local cuisine, hospitality, and comfortable accommodations that make Costa Rica “PuraVida.” Participants must be physically able to walk and hike on uneven and sloping terrain at a moderate pace, and able to tolerate elevation of 10,000 feet when we are at the Páramo.

Contact Kamal Islam at kislam@bsu.edu or (765) 284-9872 to register. Check the RCAS website for a detailed itinerary.

Leaders: Kamal Islam, BSU Professor of Wildlife Biology & Carlos Chavarria from Costa Rica

Group Size: Maximum of 16 persons

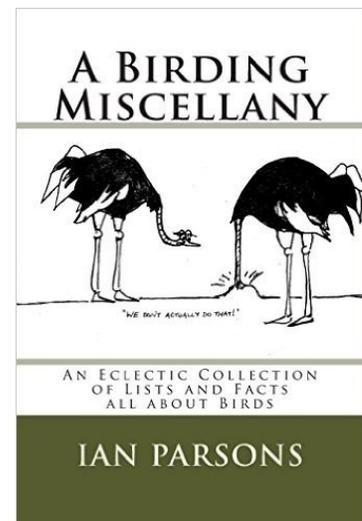
Cost: Approximately \$2100 for RCAS members (includes round trip airfare from Indianapolis to San Jose, ground transportation in Costa Rica, double-occupancy lodging, meals, fees for planned excursions, and services of your skilled leaders).

Book Review by Willy De Smet

A Birding Miscellany: An Eclectic Collection of Lists and Facts All About Birds, by Ian Parsons

Ian Parsons is a wildlife writer based in the UK and central Spain, who writes features for various magazines including Britain's Bird Watching. He recently published this new book.

“What do you call a group of Guillemots? What is the modern name for a Bog Pumper? Which type of bird can differentiate between paintings by Monet and Picasso?” Find the answers and much more in this book. If you read this book, please let us know what you think!



Birds Throughout History

The Last Great Auk

By John L. McKillip



The year was 1844, off the southwest shore of Iceland, on a towering rock precipice known as Eldey Island, when a small group of fisherman spotted a mated pair of Great Auks. Perhaps fascinated by the prospect of acquiring something different during a poor fishing venture, the men attacked, catching and killing the birds as they fled for safety. The female had been incubating an egg, but in the race to catch the adults, one of the fishermen crushed it with his boot, stamping out the species for good. In an instant, the Great Auk was no more.

In reality, the Great Auk's tragic fate had been predicted as far back as 1785 by explorer [George Cartwright](#), who wrote in one of his reports "A boat came in from Funk Island laden with birds, chiefly penguins [Great Auks]. He went on: "But it has been customary of late years, for several crews of men to live all summer on that island, for the sole purpose of killing birds for the sake of their feathers, the destruction which they have made is incredible. If a stop is not soon put to that practice, the whole breed will be diminished to almost nothing." It has been accepted that by 1800, Great Auks had entirely disappeared from this previously densely populated breeding ground off the northeast coast of Newfoundland.

Until the 18th Century, naturalists have thought the species to be so abundant that colonies consisting of hundreds of thousands packed the shores of rocky Arctic islands during the month-long breeding season. Later, the "Little Ice Age" of the 16th to the 19th centuries somewhat reduced their numbers and territory when many breeding islands became accessible to polar bears. However, even with natural predators encroaching upon their territory, Great Auks were a robust species.

Unfortunately, the specific locations of Eldey Island and Funk Island made placed each at the end of many sailors' long transatlantic journeys, when provisions were nearly depleted on the ships, and the men were becoming ravenous for fresh meat of any kind. It was not uncommon for hundreds of the birds to be herded onto the ships from these breeding grounds and killed on deck for food. Most were killed in vain, wasted, and thrown overboard. Others were salted and packed into barrels for later.

Great Auk populations 5-6,000 years ago were estimated to be in the millions-to tens-of-millions throughout Scandinavia and Iceland. Over the centuries, Great Auk bones, beaks, and other artifacts have been found in burial sites, and represented on ceremonial clothing from ancient dig sites. Thus, the Great Auk seemed to represent a significant way of life for natives until the 18th and 19th Centuries.

A few conservation attempts were attempted in order to preserve the species. In the late 18th Century, a petition was drafted to help protect the bird, and in 1775 the government of Nova Scotia made a written request to British Parliament to ban the killing of auks. The petition was granted, and anyone caught killing the auks for feathers or taking their eggs was beaten in public. However, fishermen were still allowed to kill the auks if their meat was used as bait. Despite the harsh penalties for killing Great Auks, the birds nevertheless became endangered, and also became a valuable commodity. Collectors were willing to pay as much as \$16—the equivalent of nearly a year's wage for a skilled worker at the time—for a single specimen. The rest is history.



**Robert Cooper
Audubon Society**

P.O. Box 1635
Muncie, IN 47308-1635

Dates for Your Calendar

- Sept. 13: Annual Picnic**
- Sept. 19: Living Lightly Fair**
- Sept. 26: Fox Island Field Trip**
- Sept. 27: Mounds State Park Bird Hike**
- Oct. 2-4: IN Audubon Fall Festival**
- Oct. 14: Bats of Indiana— Ryan Slack**
- Oct. 17: Salamonie State Forest Field Trip**
- Oct. 25: Mounds State Park Bird Hike**
- Nov. 16: Annual Awards Banquet**
- Dec. 9: HEE Bird Research— Jeff Riegel**

Chapter Website: www.cooperaudubon.org
Find us on Facebook and Instagram!
Email: cooperaudubon@gmail.com

Program meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month (except July, August, & 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 Robert Cooper Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society serving Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Henry, Jay, Madison, and Randolph Counties.

Officers

President:	Sarah McKillip	765-287-8464
Vice-President:	Willy De Smet	260-726-6693
Recording Sec.:	Carol Islam	765-284-9872
Treasurer:	Robert Williams	765-730-8427

Directors

2014-2016:	Annette Rose	765-741-8376
	Kevin Tungesvick	765-354-2775
2015-2017:	Kamal Islam	765-284-9872
	Kim McKenzie	707-535-6946

Committee Chairs

Conservation:	Jon Creek	765-348-4019
Education:	Deborah Brown	765-747-9332
Field Trip:	Rose Jeffery	765-716-0299
Hospitality:	Doris Cheney	765-288-0981
Membership:	Sandy Ho	765-215-4361
Program	Claire Nemes	301-775-6528
Co-Publicity and	Sarah Fischer	502-322-5861
Newsletter Ed.:	Micayla Jones	765-635-1320