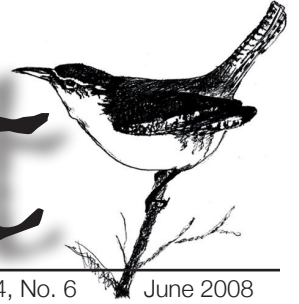


The Chat



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

Volume 34, No. 6 June 2008

June 9:

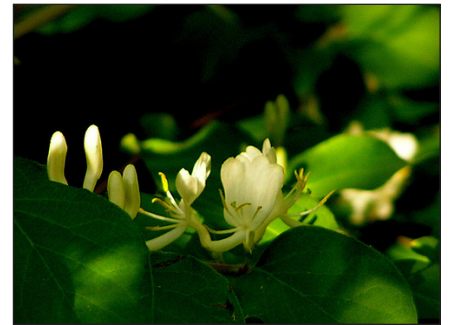
The Exotics are Coming!

Do you have invaders taking over your property? You might, and not even know it!

For our final program for the Audubon year, John Taylor will give a talk about invasive exotic plant species, their impact upon native ecosystem, and the costs (economic and otherwise) they bring. Taylor, who is Land Manager for Ball State's Field Station and Environmental Education Center, will highlight management equipment, techniques and strategies.

This is a great opportunity to learn about bush honeysuckle, garlic mustard, and other invasive species that may be on your property. You'll also learn about ways you can lend a hand to our chapter's Conservation Committee in its own efforts to control invasive species that are taking over natural areas.

We hope you'll join us at Minnetrista on **June 9**. Refreshments and time to socialize will begin at **7:00**. The meeting will begin at **7:15**, and the presentation will get underway by **7:30**.



Invasive species such as this brush honeysuckle can have costly effects on your home and surroundings.

Invasives Month

Did you know June is Invasive Species Awareness Month? For details, go to the Nature Conservancy website, at www.nature.org, and type "invasive species awareness" in the search box.

Garden Fair at Minnetrista

We hope you'll visit the Minnetrista Garden Fair, where we'll have a booth on June 7 & 8. Our booth will include a display of binoculars, lent to us by Jack's Camera, and other birding and backyard tips.

For details about the Garden Fair, which will include a full weekend of shopping, tours, demonstrations, refreshments, and more, go to www.minnetrista.net.

See You in September!

Our chapter and the Chat will be on hiatus July and August, but we'll be back in the fall with our season kick-off event: a picnic at Mounds State Park Sept. 8 and tour of the monarch butterfly garden there. Details will follow in the September Chat.

RCAS members should check the website regularly to see if any field trips or activities are scheduled for the summer.

Westview Project Update from Jon Creek

Charlie Mason has been working very hard on the Westview Project. One of his initiatives is to get more of the neighbors involved and the following message to them is descriptive of recent activities. We are reprinting it as an update to the RCAS membership. In particular, the Earth Day event was a big success. Many of the children as well as the parents and teachers very much enjoyed all the activities, the highlight being able to join in planting trees and shrubs. This is a long term project that will touch many people along the way. Mrs. Ray, the principal, has been very supportive throughout. Even the school maintenance personnel have been very supportive even though it's been more work for them in cleaning up the invasives that are cut down. The school crossing guard questions us about the work that he sees us doing. Dr. Grasso, who owns the adjoining property, was pleased to have us cut the honeysuckle on his property that was contributing the invasive seed stock for Westview. Runners passing by give us the thumbs up for our work. As a whole this is one of the most significant activities RCAS has worked on recently, particularly because of its high visibility and the ongoing nature of the habitat restoration project.

* * *

Neighbors and Friends,

I am writing to encourage you to attend the West View Ice Cream Social this Saturday, May 17 from 2:30 - 4:30 PM. Not only is it our neighborhood school, but a few of us have become partners with the school in restoring the small woodlot behind the school out by Westview Blvd. I hope you will want to visit the .4 acre woods and see the renewed area. Twenty years ago an art teacher planted the area and took students out for lessons and experiences in nature. Jim Davis helped with funding and the children had environmental education there. But the area fell into disuse and became overgrown with honeysuckle bushes, garlic mustard and black locust trees.

A year ago my wife, Charlotte, Mary Jolgren and I cleaned up the trash in that overgrown woods. Then we began to pull the garlic mustard which threatened to choke out all the plants which the bush honeysuckle did not overshadow. I asked the principal, Kathy Ray, for permission to cut down several hundred bush honeysuckle plants and some black locusts to prepare for a better mix of trees. My friend Jon Creek worked days with his chain saw and we cut most of the invasive plants.

This year on Earth Day a group of neighbors planted some 40 trees with 50 third graders, their teachers and some parents. What fun we had! Each student who wanted to was able to plant a tree. Perhaps you saw a photo of my wife (a former elementary music teacher) on the front page of the Muncie Star Press on April 23 as she was leading the third graders singing in a line dance as they wound their way through the woods on Earth Day. I talked some to them about the value of trees, how they grow, etc. Mrs. Short's class volunteered to water the newly planted trees until June when school lets out. I know the students enjoyed it; I'm sure the teachers were very appreciative of our support for their efforts in teaching the students; we who participated were renewed by being connected to the children and the education going on in our neighborhood school. Just 2 days ago several of us transplanted wildflowers from an area that will soon be torn up to widen Morrison Road.

You and I live in a lovely neighborhood with many talented and knowledgeable people. We have much to offer our neighborhood school and we can have some fun doing it with each other. I just happen to be interested in the plants (and the birds), so I thought it would be fun to reclaim the woods. You will likely have many other ideas how we might band together to support West View. I am not really in charge of anything, so your suggestions are as good as mine. I'm not really the organizer, just an interested member of the neighborhood.

Come and say hello to me on Saturday, or call or e-mail me chas.mason@sbcglobal.net

Your neighbor,
Charles Mason, 224 Alden Road, 288-9937

June 15 Conservation Field Trip

Mark your calendars for the field trip to Summit Lake State Park Sunday, June 15, at 2 p.m. The Conservation Group has been working in the area east of 500E, restoring wetlands, planting Sandhill supportive species, and eradicating invasive honeysuckle, autumn olive and white mulberry. Join us for a walking tour of this area to learn more about the work and the overall restoration strategy. We will also be on the lookout for grassland birds and others, so bring your binoculars.

Meet on 750N just east of 500E, between the ponds where we usually bird. For more information, contact Jon Creek at 765-348-4019.

Sandhill Wetland Plantings Completed

With the final 500 sedge seedlings installed at Westwood Park, southwest of New Castle, the planting phase of the Sandhill project comes to a close. The conservation group installed a total of 4000 plants during eight work days over the last two years. The sites included Loblolly Nature Preserve, Summit Lake SP, Bonham Nature Area, and Westwood Park. It all started with a vision of Sandhills and a \$900 National Audubon grant, and with partnerships and donations the total value of plants exceeded \$4600.

The goal of the plantings is to enhance habitat favorable to Sandhill Cranes during their migration through East Central Indiana. With the help and advice of Spence Restoration Nursery and the International Crane Foundation of Baraboo, WI the specific species of wetland plants most favorable to Sandhills were chosen for the installations. The planting mix was shifted early in the project upon learning from the Crane Foundation that it might be possible to have nesting Sandhills in ECI within tens years as they continue to fill up the prime nesting areas to the north. Tussock sedge, which is used for Sandhill nesting material, became the primary species installed. The project areas will continue to be monitored by the conservation group in the future.

Understanding Global Warming: **What are the impacts?**

Part 5 of a 6-part series on the facts about Global Warming



Most experts agree that at current rates of greenhouse gas build-up, the climate could warm by about 3.5 to 8 degrees Fahrenheit sometime after 2050, and the average global temperature might rise even higher. The expected consequences of such warming include major disruptions to agriculture, water supplies, and the diversity of life on Earth. The Greenland ice sheet (pictured at left) could disappear in several thousand years. Hurricanes and typhoons are expected to become more intense. Precipitation is expected to increase at high latitudes and decrease in subtropical areas. Moreover, if greenhouse gases continue to build at even a moderate rate, experts predict that sea levels will be 7 to 24 inches higher by 2100, causing devastating erosion and flooding of the coastal cities and villages where millions of Earth's inhabitants live.

Robert Cooper Audubon Society



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The Chat is published 10 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

June 7-8: Garden Fair at Minnetrista

June 9: Invasives program

June 15: Conservation field trip

Sept. 8: RCAS 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

7:00 p.m.: Coffee & Gathering

7:15 p.m.: Chapter Business

7:30 p.m.: Scheduled Program



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