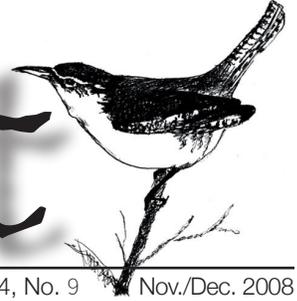


The Chat



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

Volume 34, No. 9 Nov./Dec. 2008

Nov. 10: **Celebrating Conservation Achievements in East Central Indiana**

Join us for a very special evening on Monday, November 10, from 7-9 p.m., at Minnetrista, as we honor the 2008 recipients of our chapter's annual conservation awards. This year, however, we're breaking with tradition and trimming down the event, to allow us to get better acquainted with our honorees.

Rather than having a separate program speaker, the award winners are the program this year. Each honoree will have a chance to tell and show us a bit about their unique contributions and achievements as conservation champions in East Central Indiana.

And rather than offering a full dinner, we're serving hors d'oeuvres instead, which means no reservations are needed. Of course, we'll have our usual fine array of door prizes, as well.

The evening may be "trimmer," but it'll still be a festive occasion that we hope you and your family will be sure to attend. Please bring a guest or two, too, and join us for what we expect to be a wonderful evening—perhaps the beginning of a great new tradition for the Robert Cooper Audubon Society!

Dec. 8: **Travels to the South Pacific, with Allen King**

On December 8, we welcome one of our favorite program speakers. Longtime Audubon member, world traveler, and talented photographer Allen King, of New Castle, will take us on a colorful and inspiring photo journey.

The featured destination of our evening will be Allen's recent trip to Tahiti, Tuamotu, and the Marqueses Islands, where gorgeous mountains, crystal blue waters, and coral reefs come together to create some of the most beautiful places on the planet. Get an insider's view of this paradise through the lens of Allen's camera, and, as always, we hope you'll bring a friend.

Fellowship and refreshments begin at 7 pm, followed by the chapter meeting at 7:15, and Allen's program at 7:30.

Canada Goose: October & November Bird of the Month

Canada Goose:
Branta Canadensis
By Helen Twibell

Look for Part I of
this article in the
October Chat.



During this time each bird is flightless. It is important to the flock to be able to walk or swim from the brooding area to go where they need to during this period. Open areas near water and a food source are selected by the birds so that they have a clear view to avoid being captured by predators, and other dangers. Naturally, these select locations may also be select to humans--golf courses, parks, mown lawns, farm ponds or pasture fields. The droppings left by these resident molting birds can be sources of disease, and the grazing by a large number of geese can cause turf damage. The geese become a nuisance, and it might get worse, since once a group of Canada geese become established on

a farm pond or other site, it is difficult to get any relief from the nuisance.

It is suggested that a management program that will require some doing, rather than a quick fix, is to assess all the features that attract geese and work on eliminating them. The water in a pond is an attraction, so work on eliminating access by installing overhead grid wires and letting the pond freeze in the winter. Replace heavily goose-grazed areas with native grasses or ground covers other than turf grass. Stop feeding the geese, if this has been a habit in the past. Plant crops near the pond that are not attractive to the geese. Remove any nesting structures you may have provided. A permit will be needed to remove an active nest with eggs or young in it. Barriers to discourage resident geese can be effective, such as plastic or more permanent fencing. Dense shrubbery around the water can be helpful. Noise ha-

rassment to keep geese from landing on the water helps if used correctly. Visual harassment using plastic snakes and owls has been used. Chemical repellents based on TASTE aversion might be considered. Canada geese are protected by State and Federal law, so this means you would need a valid permit to conduct any restricted activities to discourage them.

A final avenue of control concerning the Canada geese is the introduction of an experimental hunt this year February 1-15, (2008). Each legal hunter could shoot up to five a day for the two weeks, with a season limit of ten. This was offered in 30 counties in different parts of the state. Madison County seems to be the only one listed that is included in the service area of the Audubon Society and CHAT. This is an attempt to bring down the Canada goose breeding population from 125,000 birds to 80,000.

Change in the Chat

For the next year, The Chat will be trying a new printing schedule. To make our printing more effective, we will print a newsletter every two months instead of every month. In each newsletter, you will receive the information you need for the next two months. Let us now how you like the change! You can still keep up to date on our Web site, www.cooperaudubon.org.

Audubon at Home: Decreasing Lighting Impacts

A nighttime aerial view of the United States, Canada and Mexico provides a visual indication of light pollution.



Problem:

The presence of artificial light at night, also known as light pollution, is a danger to migrating birds, making them prone to colliding into buildings, homes, and other structures particularly in cloudy or foggy conditions. Birds become spatially disoriented by the false horizon created by artificial light and will fly towards backlit windows in an attempt to correct their flight. In a

recent study, 1,297 birds died after hitting a 90-foot illuminated building in Chicago during a two-year period. In that same area, an unlit structure claimed just 192 birds during the study period. (Chicago has recently adopted a “Lights Out” program. See link below.) Michael Measure of the Fatal Light Awareness Program estimates that at least 100 million birds are killed by manmade structures each year in North America.

Solutions:

Turn It Off

Turn off as many exterior and interior lights as possible during the peak migration hours of midnight to dawn. Encourage your neighbors to do the same. If you work in a high rise, contact building management and let them know about the dangers of illuminated buildings at night.

Direct It Where Needed

Outfit exterior lights with top and side shields to reduce upward and sideways illumination. Shields will direct light downward, where it is needed.

Information from: http://www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/SafeImpact.html

Muncie Christmas Bird Count

The National Audubon Society Muncie Christmas Bird Count will be held this year on Saturday, December 27. The Muncie CBC was done last year for the first time in 66 years. CBC participants count birds in the field or at feeders within a fifteen-mile diameter circle. The count circle for the Muncie CBC is centered in downtown Muncie.

More information on CBCs can be found on the NAS website. Interested birders of all skill levels are encouraged to participate. The count is sponsored by RCAS. If you have questions or would like to join in this citizen-science outing, please contact Bill Grummer at 254-1943 or billcarolee@comcast.net as soon as possible, but no later than December 17.

Field Trip Chair Needed

We're still in need of a new Field Trip Chair! It's time to get our chapter outdoors again! (We're a birding organization, after all!)

If you enjoy birding, this is a fun and easy job. Four to six months each year you get to think of places you've always wanted to bird, then invite other interested Auduboners to join you! Past Field Trip Chairs are happy to give you ideas for places to go and tips on logistics. If interested, email Bonnie Nicholson at nickrb69@yahoo.com or Barb Stedman at bastedman@gmail.com.

Robert Cooper Audubon Society



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Dates for Your Calendar

- Nov. 10:** Annual Awards Banquet
Dec. 8: December program
Dec. 12 Articles due for Jan./Feb. *Chat*. Send to Beth Simmons at basimmons2@bsu.edu
Dec. 27 : Christmas Bird Count

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 & Gathering
7:15 p.m.: Chapter Business
7:30 p.m.: Scheduled Program

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