

Bird's-eye View



Conserving
bird habitat
for over
80
years

Summer
2014

Mark your calendars!
Fall Shorebird Trip
August 16

Newsletter of The Peoria Audubon Society . . . Chapter of National Audubon since 1981
Chapter of The Peoria Academy of Science since 1930

www.peoriaaudubon.org

Contact the Peoria Audubon Society at audubon@peoriaaudubon.org

These are some of the upcoming events listed at

www.peoriaaudubon.org/calendar

Please join us for our monthly meetings at Forest Park Nature Center. Between the months of September and May, we meet the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM.

Saturday, August 16, 7:00 AM-4:00 PM

Birding the Illinois River: Fall Shorebird Field Trip

Catch the peak of shorebird migration with this field trip led by Maury Brucker of Peoria Audubon Society and Mike Miller of Peoria Park District. Destinations include Emiquon, Lake Chautauqua, Rice Lake, Banner Marsh and other great birding spots along the Illinois River south of Peoria. Trip includes transportation in Park District vans and a catered lunch. **Pre-registration is required.** This trip is best for ages 12 and up and is \$35, with FPNC and Peoria Audubon members receiving a \$5 discount. Trip will leave from Forest Park Nature Center at 7:00 AM and return at 4:00 PM. Call (309) 686-3360 for more information.

Saturday, August 23, 9:00 AM-Noon 2014 Hummingbird Festival

Vernon Kleen from Springfield (one of two licensed hummingbird banders in Illinois) will demonstrate hummingbird banding at Forest Park Nature Center. Visitors will have the opportunity to "adopt" a hummingbird for a donation as well as participate in many free activities for both adults and children, including the opportunity to feel a hummingbird's heartbeat. This event is jointly sponsored by Forest Park Nature Center and Illinois Audubon.

Wednesday, September 10, 7:00 PM Membership Meeting-The Health of Diving Ducks

Dr. Heath Hagy from the INHS Forbes Biological Station, located along the Illinois River on the Chautauqua National Wildlife Refuge, will discuss recent ecological research and the effects of human disturbance on the growth of several duck species.

Saturday, September 20 Illinois River Sweep Cleanup

Contact JD Russell (309-686-3360) for more information and to volunteer.

Notes From the President

Mike Miller

On May 14, Peoria Audubon members got together and squabbled, haggled and generally went tooth and nail against their birding brothers and sisters... All for a good cause! We held our Sanctuary Fundraising Auction to raise money for our endowment fund dedicated to our Sanctuary Initiative. This year's auction raised \$2126 for the Chillicothe Bottoms Project, a partnership with Ducks Unlimited. There are several people who deserve a hearty "Thank You" for all the success:

First off, the auction organizers, Melissa Sauder and Tracy Fox, did the heavy lifting in promoting and organizing the event. They will be the first to tell you they had a lot of help from others in soliciting gifts and auction items, but they served as excellent team leaders in making everything happen.

Melissa and Tracy would also be the first to thank all of the members, businesses and others who donated auction items. There wouldn't be an auction without things to bid on, and the community came forward with some excellent products.

Also, thanks go out for all of the Peoria Audubon members who came, checkbooks in hand, to bid and donate to this cause. It was gratifying to see folks actively supporting the Sanctuary Initiative. This latest fundraising effort has put our sanctuary fund endowment balance over the \$55,000 mark! Thanks again to all who donated, organized, bid and generally supported the cause!

Appreciating the Pure Life!

Mike Miller

While it wasn't exactly a birding trip, it was easy to add 45 species to the life list on my first visit to Costa Rica. I was there as part of a tour for Washington Community High School students, so the days were mostly filled with zip-lining, beach visits and interacting with youth. But when you are in such a biodiversity epicenter, you can't help but accidentally see a Collared Trogon or Great Potoo. Costa Rica is a country blessed with diverse habitats and climates. They are also blessed with a mindset that ecotourism is a viable part of their economy and it is therefore worth protection natural areas to enhance overall economic growth.

Here in Central Illinois, we also have a lot of diversity at our doorstep. Many of the birds in a field guide to Costa Rica are species we are familiar with. Their winter species are often our summer species. Warblers, tanagers, vireos and a multitude of neo-tropical migrating species that winter in Central America are our summer residents. Natural areas such as Emiquon Preserve, Chautauqua National Wildlife Refuge, Rice Lake and even our Chillicothe Bottoms project all have unique assemblages of waterfowl, waders and shorebirds in vast numbers that you will not see in areas even as rich as Costa Rica. We have a lot of rich ecotourism potential waiting to be tapped right here. We need only to change our mindset to realize that potential. Your average preserve in Costa Rica will average around 50 birding tours a day. Buses and vans with birders (a majority from the US) will descend on an area with binoculars in hand. A whole cottage industry of local guides with incredible birding knowledge has arisen to lead these tours. We can learn a lot from the small nation of Costa Rica on how to appreciate and benefit from the preservation of wild places.

On Saturday, August 16, from 7:00 AM-4:00 PM, we are leading our own ecotour of the Illinois River to see the late summer migration of shorebirds as they head from their arctic homes to Central and South America. Contact Forest Park Nature Center (309) 686-3360 for more information and to register. Cost is \$35 (\$30 for Nature Center and Audubon members) and includes transportation and lunch. It is a fun day full of birds.

Another opportunity to see a bird that will be wintering in Central America is at our Hummingbird Festival on Saturday, August 23 at Forest Park Nature Center from 9:00 AM-Noon.

Continued

Vernon Kleen will be there to show us the process of banding hummingbirds as they migrate to their southern wintering grounds. This is a drop-in program, so no registration is required. There will be lots of fun, free activities for both adults and children and you even have the chance to "adopt" a hummingbird and release it after banding. This is a free event, but donations are appreciated and will benefit the Illinois Audubon habitat acquisition fund.

These events are your opportunity to help grow local ecotourism. Jump on board and experience just how special, diverse and beautiful our own natural areas are. We have a lot to be proud of right here in Central Illinois. Pura Vida!



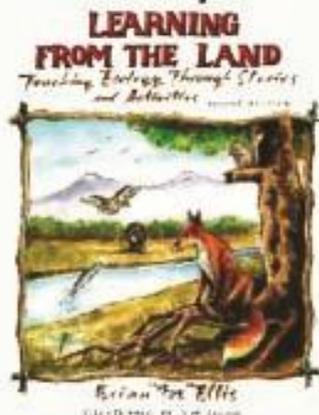
Photo Peoria Audubon Society

Thank you to all of the local businesses and individuals who donated and attended the Fundraiser for the Chillicothe Bottoms Sanctuary!

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Solitary Sandpiper at Sand Lake near Havana, Illinois from a previous year's Fall Shorebird Field Trip jointly hosted by Peoria Audubon Society and Peoria Park District. Photo by Dennis Endicott



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