



Sycamore Warbler

Volume 42 Issue 2

Summer 2017

Summer Count Underway

The Summer Breeding Bird Count is a long-time program of the Indiana Audubon Society to determine what birds are in Indiana during summer (June & July) and which are nesting. The count is organized on a county basis (like the Big Day in May).. You simply record the species and numbers of individuals you see in different places during the two months of the count. Sycamore Audubon Society typically submits lists from Tippecanoe and Warren counties and gets participation from other counties in SAS's area as well.

The count is over halfway at this point. Tippecanoe County started off with over 50 species thanks to a visit to Celery Bog by **Barney Dunning and Chuck Tuttle along with the June SAS's field trip to Prophetstown State Park. Warren County is now over 80 species** thanks to data collected by Susan Ulrich and the Beheler family. Landon Neumann has done some birding in Cass County, as Rick Read has in White County. If you see an unusual bird or any indication of a species nesting (nesting does not have to be in the count period) in one of SAS's counties please report it. Nesting indication can be an actual nest, young being feed, adults carrying food or nesting material or mating, or a male that sings repeatedly on the same territory day after day. For Tippecanoe send the info to Barney Dunning; for Warren send it to Susan Ulrich; for White send it to Rick Read (their emails are on p. 9). For Landon Neumann use landonneumann25@gmail.com. For other Indiana counties data can be sent directly to the Indiana Audubon Society (see indianaaudubon.org for forms and email to use).

A Challenge: What DO Birds Eat?

Doug Tallamy, an entomologist, wants to know what species of insects birds eat. Obviously not all insects are eaten by all birds and surprisingly little is known about what species of insects specific birds actually eat, and that knowledge is important as habitat shrinks. Insects are an essential dietary component for 96% of North American terrestrial bird species. Insects are very nutritious and pound for pound, have up to twice as much protein as beef. They contain organs in their abdomens called fat bodies which are full of high energy lipids. Protein and fat are the stuff of growth and thus make up the bulk of what breeding birds need to feed nestings. Insects are so important that when cold weather reduces insects populations 350 species of the breeding birds in North America (54%) move south or elsewhere where insect populations remain abundant.

In spite of their importance, no one knows WHICH insects are important for WHICH birds. If you want to manage to increase a specific bird species what trees/shrubs/flora should you encourage to produce the insect species that bird wants? Some broad categories are known such as bird A likes "grasshoppers", bird B eats a lot of "beetles", bird C might like "larvae", but again what species of grasshoppers, beetles or larvae is usually unknown. continued p. 6)



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Another Challenge: SAS matching \$2,000 For Children's Forest

Sycamore Audubon is matching member donations up to a total of \$2,000 for the **Hands of the Future's Children's Forest land acquisition. Go to p. 3 for more about this project** including how to donate. Money raised by this match will be used to help purchase a 18.1 acre property that Hands of the Future has an option to buy.

The money will be held in a special fund until enough money is raised to close on the property. In the event of the group being unable to raise the funds needed the donations will be returned to the donors unless the donor requests the funds go into an acquisition fund for a future land purchase by the group for the same purpose. In this case the match money would still apply to the donation

CHAPTER NEWS

See you in September

SAS's next membership meeting is **September 7th** which means you've got lots of time to take pictures to share at the traditional "Bring Your Own Program" event. As usual the meeting will begin with a carry-in dinner at Lilly Nature Center in WL. Dinner is at 6 p.m., the **program starts at 7:15**. **If you don't have time to make anything join us for dinner anyway. There's always lots of food and the Society supplies the plates, utensils, napkins, cups, and some beverages.**

50th Feast Sept. 31 - Oct.1

Mark your calendar for this year's historic 50th Feast of the Hunter's Moon. SAS plans on being there selling Turkey Legs again. **If you'd like to be one of the two dozen volunteers who get free admission both days for 4 hours working one day at the booth, let Barny Dunning know (contact info p.9).**



SAS at Wolf Park

April 24th Chuck Tuttle and Anne Piechota were at Wolf Park to help the park celebrate 45 years of operation. It turned out to be a nice, although windy, day. Chuck thinks the pheasant mount at the table only blew over once. Traffic was a bit slow as a lot was going on elsewhere, but the two of them had a number of good conversations with quite a few folks. And when **there weren't any birds or people**, the baby bison was entertaining.

Riverfest Help Needed

SAS will be at Riverfest Saturday July 8th. The event is held in Tapawingo Park in West Lafayette. There are 20 nonprofit informational booths, competitive voyageur canoe races (including one between West Lafayette and Lafayette city personnel), free pony rides, 5-K race, a tadpole race for children, bounce house, face painting, balloon animals, and much more. Hours are from 9-4.

If you can help at the booth please call or email Susan Ulrich (see p. 7). It would be nice to have someone from 10-noon and another person from noon-2 p.m. to talk to people and help children with a craft project.

Wanted for Plant Sales

Always wanted and needed are **4 inch clay plant pots (31/2" o.k.)**. Elsa Janle donates 60 or more blooming African Violets during the year to SAS's plant sales—that means finding or buying 60+ pots each year. Pots can be brought to SAS membership meetings, field trips, or other events, or you can make other arrangements by calling or emailing Susan Ulrich (see p. 7)

SAS members use over 500 plant pots for the bake & plant sales and garden expo sale each year. See **this spring's sales results below**. Thank you all for providing the steady supply of plastic pots of the various sizes needed.

Spring Sale helps Hands of the Future

It was another great bake and plant sale and raised \$791.41 for Hands of the Future. Our thanks to Elsa Janle, Anne Piechota, Karen Griggs, Connie Brown, MaryAnn McGill and Susan Ulrich who helped

at the booth and to all the people who donated item for sale as well as to all our great customers !

Garden Expo Grrr..eat too

Plants, plants, and more plants were donated and sold at this year's Garden Expo. The funds are going to help with invasive species removal at local parks. At the end of the day the tables were nearly bare and there was \$445.40 in the cash box.

Additional thanks to MaryAnn McGill & Susan Ulrich who manned the booth; Temple Pearson who loaned her driveway as a place for people to drop off plants; and Patty Rader Jones, and Mary Sue Waser who helped set up the booth and who, with Ed Bisker, loaded up the **plant donations left at Temple's plus their own donations and ferried them to the Hog Barn at the Tippecanoe County Fairgrounds.**

SAS Monticello Outreach

An Earth Day bird walk led by Rick Read got a nice follow up story along with pictures in the Monticello paper. Rick also led a bird walk the evening of June 9th, to see Chimney Swifts and owls. Besides seeing the swifts participants saw Common Nighthawk and Eastern Screech-Owl.

On June 8th Rick gave a program titled, What Owl is *that?* to the AKtion Club, a Kiwanis program for people with special needs.

"Thank You's"

SAS would like to thank Shay Kohne and Jim Klatch for their extra monetary donations to SAS since the last newsletter. **We'd also like to thank Elsa Janle, Karen Griggs, Susan Ulrich, Connie Brown, and Russ Mumford for supplying refreshments at the membership meetings this year,**

along with George Kopcha—whose coffee and tea is very popular with attendees—plus all those who brought goodies to the Christmas Party in December.

Passenger Pigeon Historical Marker

A public dedication ceremony for an Indiana State Historical marker commemorating the passenger Pigeon was held Monday, April 3, 2017. That day was the 115th anniversary of the shooting of a male Passenger Pigeon near Laurel in Franklin County, IN. It was the last verified Passenger Pigeon to have been collected from the wild.

The marker is in Gazebo Park at the Whitewater Canal State Historic Site in Metamora, IN. Some months back SAS gave a contribution to help pay for the memorial.

Rainy Celery Bog Not a Washout

For the first time since it began, the weather failed to cooperate with the **Mind BOGging event. Can't really complain because the event is to celebrate wetlands and you can't have wetlands without water.**

Because of the projected rain most activities and information booths were moved into Lilly Nature Center in advance of the event. The attendance was down, but over 200 people showed up to enjoy the indoor activities and programs, as well as outside walks and talks after the rain passed. **Mark Booth's program sponsored by the Sycamore Audubon Society was a big hit.** It attracted 60 people to start off the day. Children especially enjoyed seeing Jack, his one eyed Red-tailed Hawk as well as his other birds of prey and learning about them and about raptors in general.



Funds Needed for Children's Forest

After nearly two years of searching, Hands of the Future (HOF) found a **parcel of land suitable to become Indiana's first Children's Forest. It is an 18.1 acre site in West Lafayette across from the entrance to the Indiana Veterans Home.** The property has an older woods in the back, young woods near the road and several ephemeral ponds to increase diversity. It is also close to town making it easy for children and school classes to use—it is also expensive!

HOF has an option to purchase the property from the current owner, Mr. Colburn, for \$ 225,000. They have applied for grants from Foundations and corporate donors but will need lots of community support from individuals to reach their goal. You may remember that HOF was working with the Lafayette Parks Department to **develop a Children's Forest on a**



parcel donated to the city near the new hospital several years back. Plans seemed to be going well but the city changed its mind about how they wanted the property used. HOF has been looking for an alternative site since then.

There are a number of Children's Forests in the United States. They are outdoor, mostly natural sites where children can get outside to play, learn, and get comfortable away from sidewalks, video games, etc. They are a way for children to actively engage the natural world and encourage them to appreciate it and the beauty and wonder around them. The hope is that doing so will ignite in them a passion for all learning so that they become the best person they can be. (HOF believes every child, regardless of race, religion or economic background, deserves the same opportunities to participate in the benefits of nature to their well-being.

Eventually HOF plans include a small nature center/aretaker's building and six major areas for the children to explore: (1) Incredible Edibles – a garden for the children to learn to grow their own food; (2) Butterflies, Birds and Beyond – an area around the nature center designed to attract these; (3) Wee Folks Woods – embellished area for safe adventures for the younger children; (4) Amazing Sunflower Forest – a maze and hiding spots created mostly with sunflowers; (5) Owl Alley – a labyrinth with meditation spots (NoteL there is a Great-horned Owl in the area; and lastly (6) The Enchanted Forest – the majority of the mature woods to the rear of the property designed to allow older children to have adventures.

To learn more about Hands of the Future and this project go to www.handsofthefuture.org or to their facebook page You can also talk directly to **Zonda Bryant about the project (see p. 9). If you'd like to contribute to the SAS \$2,000 match, send checks to the SAS PO Box made out to Sycamore Audubon Society and mark it "Hands of the Future match".**

Nature Notes & News

- The first Early Bird walk of Spring produced a good assortment of waterfowl on March 23rd. Eleven species of ducks along with Canada Geese, Mute Swan, coots, grebes, herons, and kingfishers put in appearances.
- March 18th Gary Overdorf joined Debbie and Rick Read for a two hour cruise along Lake Freeman. Common Loons were everywhere: total estimate for the day was 43 loons. Eighteen other species were seen as well including 8 Horned Grebes.



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

- During the Wildlife Student Conclave at Camp Tecumseh (which SAS helped fund), Barny Dunning led the students on a bird hike. One highlight was the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker they found. Landon Neumann who was at the conclave heard a singing Louisiana Waterthrush and saw a Winter Wren.
- The **Audubon at the Overlook** event at Prophetstown State Park on March 26 produced the first Brown Thrasher of the spring.
- Two days later Celery Bog had a changing of the 'guard' with it's first Great Egret of the season and large numbers of Blue-winged Teal.
- While travelling some rural roads March 29th barny Dunning ran across a fluddle (flooded field puddle) off SR 28 about 2 miles from State Hwy 52 . The fluddle contained a male Brewer's

Blackbird mixed in with some Red-winged Blackbirds. He also noted that later that week (on April 4) his work commute was enlivened by an Osprey at Celery Bog.

- Del Arvin visited Prophetstown SP on April 7. He reported that the pair of Sandhill Cranes that had been hanging out in the park had hatched young. This is the second Sandhill nest site in Tippecanoe County, the first was at Mulvey Pond a number of years back.
- In early April, Brian and Amanda Beheler and their three children noted White Pelicans at the McGlone wetland in Warren County. The birds were there for several days. The maximum number counted was an impressive 200 birds..
- April 8 at the afternoon spring football scrimmage Chuck Tuttle saw 18 White Pelicans fly overhead, possibly heading towards Celery Bog.
- On the 11th Barny was banding with students at the Purdue Wildlife Area on SR 26. One of the birds needed was a female-plumaged Purple Finch. Since it was singing, it was apparently a male hatched last year.
- On April 14 Barny Dunning noted that each day was bringing in new migrants. People were reporting House Wrens, Northern Parula and Yellow-throated Warblers, etc. The April 13 Celery Bog bird walk had an Eared Grebe, a Caspian Tern and a pair of Black-crowned Night-herons.
- That same day John Skene saw that Lucy (the leucistic robin who showed up last year at Celery Bog) was back. A leucistic bird is somewhat similar to an albino but retains some color whereas an albino is pure white with pigment-less red eyes.
- The SAS field trip to the Bicentennial Nature Area, the new Tippecanoe County park, was interesting. There are several large barrow pits, woods, swampy areas and open fields—in other words, lots of potential. The trip turned up 40 species including two Broad-winged Hawks and a Killdeer nest with eggs
- John Skene's first Baltimore Oriole of the spring turned up April 20.

- In Cass County Bud Dodrill had his first Ruby-throated Hummingbird on April 24.
- That same day Barny Dunning had his first of season Rose-breasted Grosbeak show up at his house.
- John Skene was surprised to find 3 Black Vultures along with the usual Turkey Vultures flying over Ross Hills Park on April 25..
- Patrick Ruhl found "Lucy" sitting on a nest near the path at Celery Bog which means the bird is a female. The nest counts as a confirmed nesting for the summer bird count. Remember: if you find or found an active nest or noted nesting behavior contact the appropriate person listed on p. 1.
- May 1st Lincoln's Sparrow turned up in Sue and Ted Ulrich's yard. It stayed around with a flock of White-throated Sparrows until May 15th.
- In early May a breeding plumaged Common Loon was seen at Celery Bog. It was still there on May 11th.
- Beth Strickland had 6 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks along with a Blue Grosbeak at her feeder on May 9.



Male Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

- On May 10 Chuck Tuttle still had a lot of White-crowned Sparrows in his yard plus Baltimore Orioles and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.
- The Ulrich's nesting material (in an old suet holder) was refilled 4 times this spring. May 17 & June 22 a Parula Warbler took several beak fulls and on May 13 & 19 a Yellow-throated Warbler came. A Baltimore Oriole & Blue-grey Gnatcatcher were also seen helping themselves. (continued on p. 6)

Love to hear from you. Send your nature notes to the editor at sueandtedulrich@msn.com

CONSERVATION NEWS

Wind Alert for Great Lakes

The Great Lakes are home to one of the world's greatest bird migration routes, but wind developers want to build hundreds of wind turbines either in the Great Lakes or along their shores that could be disastrous for birds. Wind turbines are an essential source of clean energy, but they need to be responsibly located—not placed in the path of countless migratory birds.

Great Lakes Action Alert: If you live in the Great Lakes region, please send a letter to decision makers in OH, PA, NY, MI, IL, IN, WI, and MN. Ask your governor and state wildlife officials to protect birds—and keep the Great Lakes and their shorelines free of large-scale wind energy projects.

The American Bird Conservatory (ABC) continues to track and engage on other wind and associated powerline projects that pose needless risks to birds. ABC sent a letter to USFWS on the proposed "R" Transmission Line project in the Nebraska Sandhills region that threatens the endangered Whooping Crane, and another to the State of New York regarding another proposed wind development in the Great Lakes region.

Purdue Study on Bees and Neonicotinoids: bees at risk, crop yield benefits elusive

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. – Nearly every foraging honey bee in the state of Indiana will encounter neonicotinoids during corn planting season, and the neonicotinoid seed treatments produced no improvement in crop yield, according to a [Purdue University study](http://purdue.ag/perilstopollinators). (*Click <http://purdue.ag/perilstopollinators> for a video abstract*). That pretty much says it all even though the chemical companies are contesting the findings.

At the same time the Center for Biological Diversity released the first-of-its-kind study showing that of more than 4,000 known species of native North American and Hawaiian bees, over half (where there is available data on population numbers) are declining and 1 in 4 are at a growing risk for extinction.

Their *Pollinators in Peril* study found that more than 700 species are in trouble from a range of serious threats, including severe habitat loss and escalating pesticide use. The various Neonicotinoids are widely regarded as one of the biggest culprits contributing to bee mortality and colony collapse disorder. Neonicotinoids have also been known to kill birds. Currently corn and soybean seeds are nearly all treated with Neonicotinoid pesticides before planting. The plant absorbs some of the pesticide to help with insect damage.. Unfortunately the majority of the pesticide stays in the soil and gets carried by wind and water to other locations where it is equally deadly.

Plastic Ingestion by Seabirds

On average 90% of individual seabirds across all species likely have consumed plastics. Birds in the Tasman Sea and the southwest margin of the Indian ocean are at the highest risk. Some good news: plastic ingestion by Northern Fulmars has decreased in recent years likely because manufacturers in Northern Europe have reduced plastic-pellet waste in the marine environment. — *Bird Watcher's Digest*. Other research on plastics in the earth's waters by a United Nations agency predicts that the amount of plastic in the world's oceans and seas will outweigh fish by 2050.

Bird Conservation Legislation Heating Up

Bills protecting birds from collisions with federal buildings & poisoning by neonicotinoid pesticides have been introduced in the U.S. House, and several others to conserve migratory birds and Albatrosses and Petrels are expected to be introduced in the House and Senate very soon.

Please contact your Representative and Senators in support of the following three bills:

The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA)

The Federal Bird-Safe Building Act, H.R. 2542

Saving America's Pollinators Act, H.R. 3040



Methane Rule: Good News

In an unexpected victory for national parks, the Senate voted 51 to 49 to keep the Methane Waste Reduction Rule in place at least for now. This Bureau of Land Management policy curbs the unnecessary burning, waste or leakage of natural gas on federal lands. Methane is a major contributor to climate change & pollution. This preventable waste costs taxpayers an estimated \$330 million annually.

What do Birds eat from p.1.

Doug's challenge is a new citizen science project aimed at both birders and photographers: upload your digital images of birds carrying arthropods (insects, crustaceans or spiders) to the website

whatdobirdseat.com.

Include your name, date, the location the image was taken and your best guess as to whether the bird was migrating (spring or fall), feeding young, or overwintering. Even a single image will be much appreciated. He and his co-workers will try to identify the prey species to order, family, and if possible, to the actual species, and incorporate this information into an interactive Excel file. As more data comes in they may learn, for example, whether eastern bluebirds from Wisconsin have the same diet as bluebirds from Georgia, or whether birds from dry regions favor arthropods produced from detritus, whereas birds from wetter areas favor arthropods produced by **living plants. Is the insect's abundance a factor or do birds seek particular insect species and ignore others. Does their insect diet vary from month to month? Etc. "What do birds eat" is a simple question, with a multitude of complicated answers.**



Nature Notes & News from p. 4

- Bob Decker found a Mourning Warbler and at least 250 swallows (mostly Tree and Barn but at least 3 Purple Martins, 2 Bank Swallows and a Cliff Swallow) at Celery Bog on May 11. That same day at the bog Chuck Tuttle & Barny Dunning saw the 1st Black Terns of the season.
- The next day John Skene visited the Bog and had a Black-billed Cuckoo and a pair of Prothonotary Warblers,
- The pair of Mississippi Kites came back around mid-May to their territory along Indian Trail Road in West Lafayette. Karen Griggs visited the area June 9 and saw the pair mating. The birds like the tops of dead and dying trees for resting but can also be seen hawking for insects. People in the neighborhood are enthused about the presence of the birds and happy to talk about them, but please do not trespass or disturb them or the kites.
- Warbler migration was slow this year. Barny Dunning went to Celery Bog May 16 because weather radars showed a lot of migratory movements. In just one hour he had 8 species of warblers including his first Wilsons..

- May 28 John Skene flushed a Least Bittern at Celery Bog, one of 59 species he found there that day.
- Seven people participated in SAS's June 10th field trip to Prophetstown State Park despite the 6:30 am starting time. They saw a total of 55 species including most of the prairie / shrub species that the trip was targeting: Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows, Blue Grosbeak, Orchard Oriole, Dickcissel, and Yellow-breasted Chat. A group of Double-crested Cormorants provided a surprising start (not the typical sight for a grassland park). They also had a summering American Woodcock that Mark Arvin had seen the week before. Bell's Vireo was the only miss.
- Rick & Debbie Read applied ColliEscape to some of their windows but twice White-breasted Nuthatches flew into windows that weren't treated. After some time in a box in the shade, both birds luckily recovered and flew off.
- June 25 Ken Brock and a group from the lakeshore came to see the Mississippi Kites. On their return they lucked into a pair of Black-necked Stilts in a flooded field off US231 in the NW part of Tippecanoe Co.

Climate Change's Impact on Birds

Consistent with a warming climate, birds are shifting the timing of their migrations, but it remains unclear to what extent these shifts have kept pace with the changing environment. Because bird migration is primarily cued by annually consistent physiological responses to photoperiod, but conditions at their breeding grounds depend on annually variable climate, bird arrival and climate-driven spring events diverge.

A combination of satellite and citizen science data was used to estimate rates of change in the interval between spring green-up and migratory arrival for 48 breeding passerine species across North America. Both arrival and green-up changed over time, usually in the same direction (earlier or later). Although birds arrival dates changed, 9 of 48 species did not keep pace with rapidly changing green-up. Across all species the interval between arrival and green-up increased by over half a day per year. As green-up became earlier in the east, arrival of eastern breeding species increasingly lagged behind green-up, whereas in the west—where green-up typically came later—birds arrived increasingly earlier relative to green-up. Birds arriving early or late can miss a critical window to find good nesting spots and to feed on early-spring insects.

For some species, this rate of mismatch was double or triple the average, meaning some birds are arriving as many as 15 days after spring starts. Nine species in particular are struggling to keep up. These include Great-crested Flycatchers, Indigo Buntings (above left), Northern Parulas, and Blue-winged Warblers (below left).

Owls, Photographers & Birders

What is going on??

By Barny Dunning, SAS President

In recent years there has been a repeated controversy that has played out on social media, especially Facebook. Groups of people have been accused of unethical behavior regarding rare birds, and some birders have begun withholding information on sites like eBird in reaction. In our area this controversy has been most obvious with the Long-eared Owls that have been found in recent winters at Prophetstown State Park. So just what is the controversy?

When a rare bird appears in a place where it is consistently and conveniently visible, people flock to see the rarity. For birds like owls, the people include two groups: birders and photographers (some people fall into both groups). Both want to get good looks at the birds, in addition the photographers want to get good photos. The controversy develops when so many people descend on a **single location that the people's behavior, or their sheer numbers, have adverse impacts on the birds.**

The Long-eared Owls have appeared in an area of the park where they can be easily seen, since a well-marked trail goes right past the site. The owls spend their day resting in vegetation low to the ground and do not appear to be **disturbed by human visitors looking at them ... as long as the people stay on the trail.** Most of the time, the owl-seekers can get great looks at the birds – the owls can be as close as 15 feet from the trail, so people should get satisfactory looks with even modest binoculars.

But some people aren't satisfied with this. Individuals leave the trail and walk through the vegetation, apparently **hoping to get that "even better view."** Footprints in the snow or mud make it clear this has happened. If people get too close, the owls flush which is a waste of energy for the birds (especially a concern on the coldest days of winter) and also makes the birds susceptible to predators. If this happens once, probably it has no impact on the birds. But in a situation such as the Prophetstown owls, dozens perhaps hundreds of people came to see the birds – some from as far away as Kentucky and Georgia. If the owls are being harassed daily, it is likely that human behavior is having a negative impact.

Some local birders blame photographers for the harassment. This is based on some actual incidents seen by birders in our area, but also on a long history of conflict between the two groups. Some photographers have a **reputation for being more interested in "getting the shot"** than in the welfare of the birds. Photographers have been known to cut branches or vegetation from the vicinity of a nest, to get a clearer shot. Such action exposes the nest to predators. Years ago one famous photographer even cut down whole trees to lower a nest to a height where it was easier to photograph! Depending on their equipment, photographers often approach birds closer than birders think is necessary. It must be noted that not all photographers

behave this way, just like not all birders obey the rules, **stay on the trails and don't disturb the birds they see**

What should we do? For birders' behavior, the American Birding Association has a Code of Ethics that covers situations like this. Birders should not engage in behaviors that have a negative impact on birds. So in the case of the Prophetstown owls, that means staying on the trail, limiting the length of your visit and making sure that your birding does not cause the birds to show signs of distress. If you are birding with children or dogs, you need to keep them under control (or avoid sensitive sites). Photographers may not be birders at all and unaware of the and **not follow birders' rules. In response, some local birders are not reporting species such as Long-eared Owls on social media sites such as the IN-bird-I listserv or eBird.org, trying to keep the locations secret. This almost never works as the presence of the rarities eventually gets out.**

Prophetstown State Park is having discussions about what they should be doing to control visitors. Possible responses include setting up signs listing proper behavior and blocking access to the most sensitive sites with temporary fencing. **The park personnel's concern is not limited to the welfare of the birds: there are many sensitive plants and ecosystems in the park, and irresponsible behavior threatens those too.** If I may be permitted to end on a political note – the logical response by the park would be to station a park biologist or interpreter at the owl location to interact with visitors and make sure that no one violates the (as yet unwritten) rules. But the park does not have the funding to be able to afford this sensible solution. Indiana has had a series of state administrations that have not funded our natural resource departments, like the State Parks, with healthy enough budgets to allow them to deal with situations such as this.

Audubon President's statement

On the day after the news that the White House was withdrawing the United States from the Paris Climate Accords, the world's most ambitious greenhouse gas-reduction agreement to date, Audubon President and CEO David Yarnold said, **"Scrapping the Paris climate agreement is an abdication of American leadership in the fight against the biggest threat facing people and birds."**

The good news —if there is any— is that many birds only live, on average, five years, so species can potentially adapt faster than other animals that live longer.

However, while birds have certainly adapted to a changing climate over the course of their existence, they've not faced the rapid change they are currently experiencing. Will some go extinct? Probably, but which and how many? We'll just have to wait and see.

2017 Big Day in May Bird Count Results

Species	Tippecanoe	Warren	Species	Tippecanoe	Warren	Species	Tippecanoe	Warren
Canada Goose	203	134	Cliff Swallow	80	50	Indigo Bunting	91	82
Mute Swan	2	0	Barn Swallow	38	45	Dickcissel	45	25
Wood Duck	9	24	Carolina Chickadee	54	27	Bobolink	4	6
Mallard	52	10	Tufted Titmouse	53	46	Red-winged Blackbird	384	243
Blue-winged Teal	2	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	4	Eastern Meadowlark	37	52
Northern Shoveler	1	0	White-breasted Nuthatch	36	22	Common Grackle	82	76
American Wigeon	1	0	Carolina Wren	31	19	Brown-headed Cowbird	145	52
Hooded Merganser	0	2	House Wren	93	44	Orchard Oriole	13	5
Northern Bobwhite	2	7	Sedge Wren	4	0	Baltimore Oriole	105	42
Ring-necked Pheasant	5	11	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	5	0	House Finch	47	21
Wild Turkey	23	15	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	15	50	American Goldfinch	116	49
Pied-billed Grebe	3	1	Eastern Bluebird	45	28	House Sparrow	147	80
Double-crested Cormorant	10	4	Veery	5	2	Total individuals	4884	2856
Great Blue Heron	59	9	Gray-cheeked Thrush	2	3	Total Species	142	133
Green Heron	8	5	Swainson's Thrush	24	7			
Turkey Vulture	91	107	Wood Thrush	29	15			
Bald Eagle	7	6	American Robin	282	133			
Northern Harrier	1	1	Gray Catbird	114	37			
Cooper's Hawk	1	2	Northern Mockingbird	2	2			
Red-shouldered Hawk	6	8	Brown Thrasher	14	15			
Red-tailed Hawk	12	17	European Starling	187	122			
American Kestrel	5	7	Cedar Waxwing	11	7			
Killdeer	19	16	Blue-winged Warbler	1	0			
Solitary Sandpiper	0	1	Golden-winged Warbler	0	1			
Spotted Sandpiper	6	1	Tennessee Warbler	34	10			
Least Sandpiper	1	0	Orange-crowned Warbler	0	1			
Short-billed Dowitcher	1	0	Nashville Warbler	17	11			
American Woodcock	0	2	Northern Parula	24	12			
Ring-billed Gull	3	0	Yellow Warbler	44	14			
Caspian Tern	2	0	Chestnut-sided Warbler	8	3			
Black Tern	7	4	Magnolia Warbler	10	1			
Common Tern	0	2	Cape May Warbler	2	0			
Rock Pigeon	23	8	Yellow-rumped Warbler	63	16			
Mourning Dove	58	72	Black-throat Green Warbler	9	8			
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	1	0	Blackburnian Warbler	4	3			
Black-billed Cuckoo	1	0	Yellow-throated Warbler	4	3			
Eastern Screech Owl	0	1	Pine Warbler	4	0			
Barred Owl	5	5	Prairie Warbler	1	1			
Common Nighthawk	2	3	Palm Warbler	33	14			
Whip-Poor-will	0	1	Bay-breasted Warbler	0	2			
Chimney Swift	33	17	Blackpoll Warbler	5	0			
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	5	13	Cerulean Warbler	0	1			
Belted Kingfisher	6	6	Black-and-White Warbler	7	3			
Red-headed Woodpecker	20	11	American Redstart	15	6			
Red-bellied Woodpecker	65	34	Prothonotary Warbler	6	0			
Downy Woodpecker	34	18	Worm-eating Warbler	4	1			
Hairy Woodpecker	10	4	Ovenbird	12	4			
Northern Flicker	22	10	Northern Waterthrush	10	5			
Pileated Woodpecker	21	8	Louisiana Waterthrush	12	4			
Olive-sided Flycatcher	1	0	Kentucky Warbler	9	10			
Eastern Wood-Pewee	19	14	Common Yellowthroat	154	51			
Acadian Flycatcher	7	3	Wilson's Warbler	2	2			
Alder Flycatcher	3	0	Yellow-breasted Chat	8	7			
Willow Flycatcher	3	1	Eastern Towhee	27	21			
Least Flycatcher	10	3	American Tree Sparrow	0	2			
Eastern Phoebe	28	26	Chipping Sparrow	69	47			
Great Crested Flycatcher	20	24	Field Sparrow	47	42			
Eastern Kingbird	65	44	Vesper Sparrow	6	3			
White-eyed Vireo	12	3	Lark Sparrow	4	2			
Bell's Vireo	1	0	Savannah Sparrow	12	14			
Yellow-throated Vireo	9	6	Grasshopper Sparrow	8	1			
Blue-headed Vireo	3	2	Henslow's Sparrow	0	2			
Warbling Vireo	51	9	Song Sparrow	103	21			
Red-eyed Vireo	34	18	Lincoln's Sparrow	3	1			
Blue Jay	132	33	Swamp Sparrow	3	0			
American Crow	42	57	White-throated Sparrow	17	3			
Horned Lark	7	5	White-crowned Sparrow	71	28			
Purple Martin	12	0	Summer Tanager	3	4			
Tree Swallow	39	43	Scarlet Tanager	32	23			
No Rough-winged Swallow	42	36	Northern Cardinal	153	42			
Bank Swallow	12	15	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	83	46			

Participants Tippecanoe (18): Delano, Kevin, Kyle, & Mark Arvin; Mike & Joyce Brattain; Barb Brown; Barny Dunning, (compiler); Quinell Gutwein; George Kopcha; Elsa Janle & Harry Potter; Beth Misner; Lorraine Myer; John Skene; Becky & Larry Theller; Chuck Tuttle.

Participants Warren (10) : Brian, Amanda, Phoebe, Callum & Liam Beheler; Joanna Billiard; Louise Decker; Shelly Foran, Ellen Tobias; Ted & Susan Ulrich (compiler).

Tippecanoe's list of species was pretty typical, From 2006-2013 the county averaged 147 species with a high of 161 and low of 133. But the number of individual birds of many migrants reported were in low numbers in both counties. Waterbirds and shorebirds were particularly lacking, both in species and numbers..

Tippecanoe's count lucked out as several species were added by individuals who weren't count participants. Jean Herr had the only Mockingbirds at her home (learned about via a facebook posting), and Wed Homoya added American Wigeon at Mulvey Pond and a Black-billed Cuckoo at Celery Bog while participating in a statewide Birdathon. There were a number of good finds, Patrick Ruhl had Caspian Terns and Barny Dunning's visit to the new Bicentennial Nature Park produced Black Terns. John Skene found Prairie Warblers and a Bell's Vireo in his territory along the Wabash and the Thellers had their usual harvest of grassland species at Prophetstown State Park.

Warren County had a number of highlights. Two groups found Mockingbirds and Henslow's Sparrows. There were also Common and Black Terns at a privately owned wetlands, and elsewhere a Golden-winged Warbler, and two lingering American Tree Sparrows.

Taking the results together, 155 species of birds were located in the two counties compared to the 171 species last year. 121 of those species were found on both counties. **Tippecanoe had 21 species that weren't found in Warren County, and Warren had 12 species that weren't found in Tippecanoe County.**

If you want the email color versions of the newsletter rather than the black & white hard copy, email sueandtedulrich@msn.com.

Join Sycamore Audubon Society!

You can support Sycamore Audubon Society's local educational and conservation work by becoming or renewing as a Friend of SAS. Friends become chapter members of the Sycamore Audubon Society and receive our quarterly newsletter, *The Sycamore Warbler*.

You can support national conservation efforts by joining the National Audubon Society (NAS). Contact SAS's membership chair for information. When you join NAS, (\$20 minimum) you will receive *Audubon* magazine **along with automatic chapter membership in SAS**. Since NAS dues primarily support national projects, we encourage all national members to ALSO become Friends of SAS. As a Friend, you contribute directly to our local chapter and its projects.

Chapter Membership Application Date: _____

Name : _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State/Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Send to : Sycamore Audubon Society, P.O. Box 2716, West Lafayette, IN 47996-2716.

Friend of the Sycamore Audubon Society \$15/year x ____ year(s) \$ _____

SAS's treasurer would appreciate payments in August-September to make it easier to keep track, however Friends memberships are credited to whatever month a Friend first joined.

New Member Renewal

I would prefer to receive the chapter newsletter by email paper

Additional contribution to SAS for _____ \$ _____

Total enclosed \$ _____

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Two Good Sites Tell about What Audubon is Doing

The National Audubon Society Board of Directors met in Chicago in May. Audubon chapters were featured at many different points during the meeting. Loren Smith, executive director of Buffalo Audubon Society gave a presentation on his partnership with Audubon Great Lakes region staff and other Audubon chapters along the Great Lakes, sharing how they're working together on wetlands restoration and bird monitoring. In addition, chapters from Wisconsin and Illinois joined the chapter forum with David Yarnold and Audubon Board Chair Maggie Walker, and lastly new Audubon field organizer staff Andrew Yates and Tami Lunan presented on the great partnerships they are building with Audubon chapters in South Carolina and Ohio.

Below are links to two of the key documents from that meeting and well worth looking through by people interested in seeing what Audubon plans and actions are.

The first is the latest **President's Report** which can be found at:

https://action.audubon.org/sites/default/files/1.0_Presidents_Report_May_2017.pdf

The second is *Audubon in the Mississippi Flyway*. Go to:

https://action.audubon.org/sites/default/files/3.0_Audubon_in_the_Mississippi_Flyway.pdf



Tidbits

- ◆ The Chilean organization Red de Observadores de Aves y Vida Silvestre de Chile (ROC), announced the discovery of the first known nest of the Ringed Storm-Petrel. Located 70 km inland in the Atacama Desert, the site is far from what would be considered typical seabird nesting habitat.
- ◆ The continental US population of the large non-migratory subspecies of Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis maxima*) is now estimated at some 5-million birds. This subspecies was released in various sites in the mid-1900's and has become a problem at urban lakes and ponds. One of the more polite terms applied to them is "Sky Carp".
- ◆ Researchers found residents in urban areas with more street trees felt healthier—regardless of actual health—than those in neighborhoods with fewer trees. More surprisingly, adding 10 trees per city block produced health perceptions comparable to an increase in annual personal income of \$10,000. (nature.com/articles/srep)



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A subscription is included with membership in National Audubon or Sycamore Audubon Society.

Summer Sycamore Audubon Calendar 2017

- June 1 through July 31 *Summer Breeding Bird Count.* ANY bird seen in Warren, Tippecanoe, White, Cass, or other county can be included whether or not the bird might be nesting—but if you note any nesting indication please include that as well. Simply contact the people listed on p.1.
- July 8 Saturday *Riverfest 2017. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. A festival celebrating the Wabash River. There's a 5 K run, voyageur canoe races, a droplet race for smaller children, free pony rides, face painting, and lots more. SAS will have a booth as will 20 or so other organizations. Lots of fun activities for children and info for adults.*
- July 15 Saturday *Audubon at the Overlook.* Join SAS members for an evening at the overlook at Prophetstown State Park. Stop by to see what birds are active between 6-8 p.m. The overlook is at the end of the park road below the parking area. Park entrance fee required unless you are camping or have a pass.
- August 19 Saturday *Audubon at the Overlook.* Another chance to meet some Audubon folk and find out what birds are around at Prophetstown SP. This one is a morning visit from 8-10 a.m. See above listing.
- August 25-26 Fri -Saturday *Hummingbird Banding with Amy Wilms. Amy is Indiana's only licensed hummingbird bander. These tiny birds require special handling and experience. Trip is to the Indiana Audubon Society's Mary Gray Sanctuary near Connorsville. Banding is done in the early morning, so we will caravan down on Friday night and camp on the property (camping is free). Call or email Barny Dunning if you are interested to get details for the trip (see p. 9).*
- September 2 Saturday *Early Fall Migrants.* Meet at the Celery Bog gravel parking lot at 7:30 a.m. to see what waves of birds might have started to move through the area. A 1/2 day trip.
- September 7 Thursday *Carry-in Dinner & Bring Your Own Program night.* Always a winner! 6 p.m. for the dinner, 7:15 for the program. SAS supplies plates, silverware, cups, napkins & beverages. Bring a dish to share or just show up, and if you have one, bring a 5 or so minute program to show. Lilly Nature Center in Celery Bog Park, West Lafayette. Free parking.