



Sycamore Warbler

Volume 42 Issue 4 Winter 2017-18

5 Juncos, 1 White-crowned Sparrow... its CBC time

What does CBC stand for? Christmas Bird Count. These are held all over the U.S. and elsewhere to document what birds are where. Data from the previous 117 years has provided important information about species trends including changes in range and population. Roughly 50 counts are held in Indiana. Of those the Lafayette CBC has been going the longest. There are two other 'local' counts as well. All three would welcome your help. See below.



Participants **ARE** needed!

It's a fun opportunity to test and improve your identification skills—and you don't need to be an expert. The normal 15-mile CBC circle covers a huge area and parts get no coverage or minimal coverage so any bird info you get for those areas will help even if there are birds you can't identify. You can get an area and forms to fill out at SAS's December 14th meeting, or contact the compiler directly. These are all-day counts meaning birds seen or heard between midnight to midnight are countable. Some participants go out for part of the day, others go all day.

Some people participate as **Feeder Watchers**. Their 'territory' is their yard and feeders. Feeders often produce birds not seen elsewhere so are an important part of the count. Can't help officially, but see an unusual bird that day? Report it. Here are the compilers and their contact information:

December 16 Lafayette CBC: Ed Hopkins 765-463-5927; birder4in@gmail.com (note: this count holds a compilation party at 8 p.m. at the Wild Bird Shoppe to tally the results. Bring something edible to share. Society provides beverages, plates, etc.

December 23 Cass County CBC: Landon Neumann 574-516-7940; landonneumann25@gmail.com

January 1 Willow-Slough-Iroquois Preserves CBC: Ed Hopkins 765-463-5927; birder4in@gmail.com

from NAS: Arctic Refuge Drilling: ecological disaster with poor financial justification

The Senate's version of the federal budget voted on recently would open one of the most fragile, pristine landscapes in America to oil and gas exploration. The problem is that the numbers don't even come close to adding up.

Budgets proposed by both the Senate and the Trump administration anticipate oil leases selling for 10 times what they sold for last year but there's lots more cheaper domestic oil available today. What's more, the budgets anticipate selling nearly *every* oil lease that would become available — a goal that is more than double what even the most optimistic recent experience tells us. And there's more. If the oil companies produce more, they won't make America more energy independent—they'll export the oil, fueling the economies of China, Mexico and two dozen other countries.

This reckless budget math would be troubling regardless, but the intended victim is America's last truly wild

frontier. It's part of one of America's most prolific bird nurseries and it's the place where many of Alaska's caribou calves first stand on wobbly legs. In summer Alaska's Arctic Refuge is home to *over half a billion birds* before they migrate south, where they touch every one of the lower 48 states as well as six continents.

The refuge is a haven for endangered polar bears as well as the Gwich'in people who depend on the refuge for their survival and revere it as a sacred place. The Arctic Refuge has enjoyed bipartisan support ever since Republican President Eisenhower and Congress established its first protections in 1960.

President Trump's budget assumes oil company leases in the Arctic Refuge will generate \$1.8 billion in revenues for the federal treasury. The Senate budget anticipates at least \$1 billion. Both figures defy everything the oil market is telling us. Companies will have to bid an average of \$2,400 for every single one of the 1.5 million acres that they

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CHAPTER NEWS

SAS's Holiday Party

Just a reminder that SAS's December 14th meeting is also the annual Sycamore Audubon Holiday Party. People are asked to bring some Christmas cookies or other goodies to share.

Summer Bird Counts

The June & July Indiana Summer Count for Tippecanoe County totaled 120 bird species. Highlights were the pair of Black-necked Stilts that nested in a flooded field off Route 231; the returning Mississippi Kites in West Lafayette; and the Northern Harrier at Prophetstown in early June. Twenty-six people contributed records to the county total, mostly through eBird.org.

In Warren County three people turned up 94 species of birds. The highlight was a Caspian Tern found on a privately owned wetland.

Feast Report

This year's feast was easier for participants as SAS sold out of turkey legs by 2 p.m. both days. However it was easier because our order of 1200 pounds of legs resulted in fewer legs to sell as most were BIG 2-pounders! There were lots of disappointed people and not as much money for SAS's coffers.

Fall Bake & Plant Sale

SAS had a great Bake & Plant Sale, raising \$720 for the Friends of Kankakee Sands and the Tucson Audubon Society's Patton Center for Hummingbirds. Our thanks to Anne Piechota, MaryAnn McGill, Elisabeth Kornblum, Karen Griggs and Susan Ulrich for manning the sale, and of course to all the people donating the items that were sold.

Recent Board Action

The board donated \$200 for the 2018 Indiana Dunes Birding Festival. It is also working with Dan Dunten, WL parks and Recreation, on helping plan new bird displays at Celery Bog.

Nature Club Grant

The Community Foundation of White County's *Women Giving Together* has awarded SAS a grant of \$900 to continue its support for the Audubon afterschool nature club for 2017-18. Thank you, *Giving for Women*, for your grant, and thank you, Rick Read, for starting the club and writing the grant.



River
Otter

Non-game Fund Helped Eagles, Otters and more Now we need to help it.

In 2016 and 2017, the Indiana Nongame Fund experienced a nearly 60 percent decline in donations compared to earlier years. This is the result of Indiana's moving the donation line from the main tax form and its being lost on the bottom of Schedule 5 where you need to fill in the fund name and code number (200) along with what amount of your refund you are donating.

These funds are important for birds and other non-game animals in Indiana. For every \$5 donated there

is another \$9 awarded in federal grants. This program successfully reintroduced Bald Eagles and River Otters. Species currently benefiting under the program include six bird species, mammals (including a number of bats), along with mussels and other invertebrates.

Note: if you don't get a refund, a simple form to donate will be available at the next few SAS meetings or you can request one via snail mail or email from Susan Ulrich (see p. 9).

Meeting Refreshments

SAS is looking for members to provide edible treats for January 11, February 8th, April 12th, and May 10th membership meetings. Earlier this year treats were provided by Connie Brown, Susan Ulrich, and Karen Griggs. Elsa Janle is handling March, and George Kopcha has been supplying coffee and tea. Napkins and cups are provided so all you need to bring are some edible nibbles. To volunteer, sign up at a meeting or email Susan Ulrich (p. 9).

Bat Habitat Improved

The RIP Squad had a wildly successful *Pulling for Bats* event at Ross Hills Park October 22nd thanks to 20 Alpha Phi Omega students help. Alpha Phi Omega is a service fraternity made up of both men and women. It looked like a war zone afterwards as the students eagerly attacked honeysuckle on multiple fronts. How does honeysuckle hurt bats? Local insects don't use them for feeding or egg laying so the more honeysuckle in an area, the fewer insects for bats to eat.

RIP Squad activity goes thru **Thursday, December 21. RIP's usual** activities have also benefited from some Alpha Phi Omega volunteers. **THANK YOU,** Alpha Phi Omega!

If you'd like to do a bit to improve bird, plant and wildlife habitat come to one of the invasive species removals at Prophets Rock Woods Tuesdays and/or Ross Hills Park Thursdays from 3-5 p.m. Progress is really becoming noticeable.

The RIP squad works on Garlic Mustard in local parks in the spring. Watch for the schedule in the next *Warbler*.

Hog Island Family Camp

Rick Read and his wife, Debbie, signed up to attend Hog Island Family Camp with their 11-year old granddaughter and her parents next summer. Hog Island is a National Audubon Society facility located in Maine. It will be four & a half days packed with all kinds of nature and science related things to do, from breakfast until 9 p.m. during the first week of August. Phew!

Thank You's

Jim Klatch sent in another generous donation to the Pookie Fund for SAS environmental education efforts. Thank You, Jim.

Thanks also to Bridget O'Brien for donating a number of plants, plant stands and other plant related items to SAS for sale next spring, and to Tom Johnson for helping **move them. Speaking of plants we'd** also like to thank Dan Dunten for giving and delivering 4 very large houseplants SAS will sell next April.

Lastly we need to thank Chen Gong, and William Nicoll for their financial contributions to SAS.

Congrats to Liz Solberg

Liz, a long-time environmentalist (& Audubon member), was awarded the *Environmentalist of the Year* award at the 10th Annual Greening the Statehouse event on December 2nd. Well deserved.

Watch for out of season Hummingbirds

See a hummingbird before March 1? Pay attention. It could be something other than a Ruby-throat. A number of hummingbird species are similar to Ruby-throats. **That's why it is best to get a photo if possible. Female and young Rufous Hummingbirds as well as Black-chinned may "pass" as Ruby-throated Hummers if not looked at carefully.**

Indiana has more than 80 records of Rufous Hummingbirds, one of Black-chinned, two of Mexican Violetear, one of Anna's, and two of Calliope Hummingbirds. Typically, rare hummingbirds are present in Indiana only in fall and early winter. A few Rufous Hummingbirds have spent the entire winter in Indiana and only left for their breeding grounds in mid-April.

Any hummingbird seen from now through next March should be carefully examined for species ID. Please pass along information and photos to Don Gorney (317-501-4212; dongorney@yahoo.com). Ideally, photos will include a clear image of the closed wing. As always, if Don learns of a rare hummingbird and the homeowner allows visitation, he will post details.

Americus Quarry Update

Kay & Bill Miller of the Americus Area Citizen's Coalition (AACC) report that after the BZA decision against the quarry, the Rogers Group had 30 days to appeal the BZA decision. That deadline was Monday, Nov. 27. Rogers Group had not appealed to the local courts as of Thursday Nov. 30.

The Millers do not know why, unless Rogers Group have chosen not to pursue due to expense. The AACC board continues to watch for possible activity in the area and in the courts. They will keep us posted if anything occurs.

Comments from the Bonn Climate Change Summit

-John Coequyt, Director, Global Climate Policy, Sierra Club

Allow me to share just a few personal highlights from my time in Bonn:

- The world is coming together to phase out coal. 25,000 people marched in the streets of Bonn at the largest climate rally in German history, calling for a coal phase out. Additionally, Canada and the UK announced the *Powering Past Coal Alliance*, joining with 25 other governments to speed the global transition away from coal.
- Trump's fossil fuel rhetoric falls flat. As Trump's team sought to promote backwards ideas like "clean coal," they were confronted with chants including "Climate justice now." and "Keep it in the ground."
- The Beyond Coal Campaign goes global. With the launch of *Europe Beyond Coal* and a \$50 million commitment from Michael Bloomberg to phase out coal internationally, an already-strong global movement to phase out coal will only get stronger.
- 1.1 million Americans declare they are #Stillin. Trump doesn't speak for the vast majority of Americans who want cleaner air and water and continued climate action. Despite Trump's inaction, cities, states, and thousands of individuals continue to move us toward fulfilling our commitments under the Paris Climate Accords.

Here are a few quick things you can do to turn promise into reality:

1. [Ask your mayor to join Mayors For 100% Clean Energy now!](#)
2. [Submit a comment to defend the Clean Power Plan!](#)
3. [Demand trade deals that put people and the environment first!](#)
4. [Tell automakers: Put clean cars in the fast lane!](#)

CONSERVATION NEWS

Pepsi & Deforestation

The last remaining, critically endangered Sumatran elephants are being pushed to the brink of extinction as their rainforest home is destroyed for Conflict Palm Oil — and snack food giant PepsiCo is linked to the destruction, *AGAIN*.

The elephants have lost more than half their numbers due to habitat destruction. A recent Rainforest Action Network (RAN) investigation, using in part drone footage, showed that palm oil from an area of illegally destroyed rainforest was sold to major suppliers of PepsiCo — not the first time PepsiCo has been caught at this.



Pepsi, Doritos, Lay's, Cheetos, Ruffles, and many more household names fall under the PepsiCo brand. This corporation is and has been complicit in the obliteration of rainforests in Indonesia and **the violation of workers' rights for years.** Your next bag of Doritos could be the closest thing to extinction in a bag. Check out RAN's website for more information on this and

Keystone XL getting a bit 'iffy'?

Nebraska's Public Service Commission just approved the Keystone XL (KXL) tar sands pipeline but the route they approved was an alternative route that TransCanada, the company behind the pipeline, has called unworkable in the past.

That means TransCanada still has multiple hurdles to overcome -- so the pipeline may never be built. It gives the opponents time to continuing fighting by urging banks to stop their funding. **One major bank already divested as a result of public pressure. It is clear that pipelines are a risky investment. TransCanada has publicly stated that they aren't sure Keystone XL will ever be built. With enough pressure this threat can be stopped. What can an individual do? Contact Wells Fargo, a key funder of TransCanada. Demand that they stand with the landowners and tribes along the path of Keystone XL and not fund this climate-unfriendly, risky oil-sands pipeline.**

Conservation on Ag Land Strengthened

A new bill continues the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Improvement Act. It expands the reach and effectiveness of conservation projects nationally. The RCPP was originally created in the 2014 Farm Bill and has been critical for improving habitat for birds on private lands across all the landscapes on which Audubon works.

Grand Canyon Mining Threat

Teddy Roosevelt called it "the one great sight every American should see".

For years, the Grand Canyon region has been protected from new mining claims, but a report released recently shows that the Trump administration considers the mining ban to be a "burden" and is intent on reversing it.

The National Parks and Conservation Association says there's no other way to put it: "*This is insane.* It's the ultimate statement from this administration that nothing -- *not even the Grand Canyon!* -- is more important than letting industries mine and drill on the land that we all own."

The Zombie-like Pebble Mine

Despite overwhelming opposition from Alaskans, it's back. A huge open-pit mine could be built in the heart of **one of the world's richest remaining salmon ecosystems.** The Trump administration has cut a deal with the foreign corporation that would build the massive Pebble Mine in the Bristol Bay watershed, and Alaskans once again are speaking up against it.

"I am from the area that this mine would affect. The king salmon that we depend on spawn in the area. If the mine contaminates that watershed we will have no more king salmon. We cannot eat money or the metals that will be taken from the ground but if we protect this fishery we will eat for another thousand years." Another Alaskan wrote "The fishing of those salmon represents a large part of our state economy. More importantly, they sustain our native peoples way of life. Don't allow the mine because you cannot undo the damage done to an ecosystem!"

San Pedro River Water Theft.

Southeast Arizona's San Pedro River is one of the most beautiful, important riparian areas in the United States. More than 250 migrant bird species depend on it, and beneath its cottonwood trees, desert life abounds.

But "Villages at Vigneto," a new sprawl development in Benson, Ariz., could put the future of this river at risk. The Army Corps of Engineers is re-evaluating the Clean Water Act permit it issued in 2006 when the project was known as Whetstone Ranch. But since 2006 the proposal has mushroomed. Developers want golf courses, artificial lakes and *more than 29,000 homes*—a Tuscany-themed playground wasting life altering water. Not a good fit in a desert.

Ask the Army Corps to revoke the 2006 permit and stop what would be theft of public water from San Pedro.

Winter Sycamore Audubon Calendar 2017-18

Programs are held on the 2nd Thursday at 7:15 PM in the Lilly Nature Center in West Lafayette. People are invited to come beforehand for "Dinner & Conversation" starting at 6:00 PM at the MCL Cafeteria (WL). Field trip times vary.

- December 14 Thursday Program: *The Living School Yards*, Zonda Bryant, executive director of Hands of the Future. This group has made huge strides in reaching children and introducing them to the environment. 7:15 p.m. Lilly Nature Center, Celery Bog Park, WL. Free parking and the SAS Holiday Cookie Party. Come at 6:30 to sign for the various Christmas Bird Counts and pick up the forms.
- Dec 16 Saturday LAFAYETTE AREA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT. A citizen science project and like all CBC's can always use more "citizens" to help cover all of the official 15 mile count circle. Contact Ed Hopkins, compiler (see page 1).
- December 23 Saturday CASS COUNTY AREA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT. People are needed to help with this 15-mile circle bird count also. Contact Landon Neumann, compiler (see page 1).
- January 1 Monday WILLOW SLOUGH-IROQUOIS CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT. As above, people are needed to help with this count which includes part of Illinois. Contact Ed Hopkins, compiler (see page 1).
- January 1 Monday First Day Walk. Prophetstown's annual hike to greet the new year. 1-3 p.m. Meet at the Visitor's Center. There is no entrance or participation fee charged for this event.
- January 11 Thursday Program: *Bison and Kankakee Sands*. Barb Lucas, a TNC Kankakee docent, naturalist and photographer. Barb gives a wonderful programs. This one covers Kankakee Sands, the bison experiment and her experiences there. 7:15 p.m. Lilly Nature Center, Celery Bog Park, WL. Free parking and refreshments.
- January 27 Saturday Winter Birds. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the gravel parking lot, Celery Bog to look there and elsewhere for wintering longspurs, buntings, Snowy Owls or whatever is being reported. Possible stop at a feeder if interesting birds are present. ½ day trip.
- BIRDING NOTE Will this winter be your chance to see a Snowy Owl on a field trip? According to project SNOWstorm, the data predicts a big irruption of Snowy Owls across the continental U.S. this year. You can also sign up via email with Barny Dunning (p. 9) for *Birding on the Fly*, the local email alert for interesting bird sightings in the area.
- February 8 Thursday Program: . Barny Dunning, Purdue Department of Forestry & Natural resources. Barny and his students have begun a series of studies examining how birds migrate through our Hoosier landscapes that are heavily impacted by human land-use. We will hear about studies involving songbirds, owls and shorebirds that use our forests, wetlands and agricultural fields. 7:15 p.m. Lilly Nature Center, Celery Bog Park, WL. Free parking and refreshments.
- February 24 Saturday Spring Waterfowl Trip. Spring will be back! Predicting the peak of waterfowl migration has become riskier due to the mild winters of recent years. But late February seems to be a good time for a variety of water birds. Meet at 8 am at the gravel parking lot at Celery Bog. We will bird there and at Pine Creek Gamebird Area and also along the Wabash River or wherever birds are being found. Bald Eagles should be on their nests, so we will visit at least one nesting area. ½ day trip.
- March 3 Saturday American Woodcock Walk. A rite of spring for many people is an evening spent listening for and possibly seeing Woodcock (aka 'Doodle bird') males going through their spring courtship routines. Meet at the Tippecanoe Amphitheater parking lot at 6:20 p.m.
- March 8 Thursday Program: Program: *What Role does Hunting play in Conservation?* Jarred Brooke, Wildlife Extension Specialist, Forestry and Natural Resources Department, Purdue University. Jarred is relatively new to Purdue and teaches a course in hunting. 7:15 p.m. Lilly Nature Center, Celery Bog Park, WL. Free parking and refreshments.
- March 22 & Following Thursdays Early Bird Walks at Celery Bog. These morning walks start up again as the spring migrants and summer residents return. Meet at 8 a.m. at the gravel parking lot at Celery Bog every Thursday morning through spring migration.



Nature Notes & News

● A big SAS group travelled to the Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary near Richmond Aug. 28 to see hummingbird banding. The sanctuary is owned by the Indiana Audubon Society and managed by Amy and Carl Wilms. Amy is one of only 100 licensed hummingbird banders in the U.S.

Five Audubon members were joined by 9 Purdue wildlife students. Friday night the students ran a black light trap to collect moths. Most Audubon members spent the night in Chuck Tuttle's comfortable RV, while the rest used tents. Three hours Saturday was spent banding songbirds followed by 2 hours catching and watching Amy band hummers. Species seen in the hand included Kentucky and Tennessee Warblers.

Amy (below) gave tons of details on aging and sexing Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. More than 15 were caught of which eleven were recaptures. The oldest was a minimum of 4 years old.



● Aug. 29 Dan Miller reported that good number of migrant warblers were now at Celery Bog including Blue-winged, Black-and-white, Blackburnian, Black-throated Green, Magnolia, Chestnut-sided, Ovenbird and American Redstart.

● Also that day Chuck Tuttle saw a hundred or more Common Night-hawks at the Prophetstown farm. He also had an American Bittern which had been there for several days. Fall migration was underway!

● Barny Dunning saw almost 30 Pied-billed Grebes & his FOF Nashville Warbler at Celery Bog Sept. 6.

● John Skene visited the bog the next day and tallied 65 species including 2 Osprey and 13 species of warbler. There were 115 Wood ducks but only 1 Coot!

● Karl Wood noted a Veery on Aug 24th and an Ovenbird on Sept 3rd, both at the Celery Bog.

● **Audubon's Sept. 16 field trip to the** Purdue Wildlife area produced great views of a male Black-throated Blue Warbler and Savanna Sparrow. There was also the first fall Red-breasted Nuthatch and an impressive number of Brown Thrashers and Wood Ducks. Pleasant weather and 35 species.

● Alan Brunner, Peter Scott and Mike Brattain began a multiday Indiana birding trip Sept. 9. The first day they visited Shades State Park (40 species including Broad-winged Hawk and 9 species of warblers); Celery Bog (57 species including Osprey and 15 species of warblers); and Pine Creek Gamebird Area (27 species including Sora, Bobolink and 6 species of shorebirds). Good start for their trip.

● Sept. 18 Landon Neumann spotted a Cinnamon Teal at Celery Bog. This is the first record of this rare western species for the bog (and perhaps only the second for the county). Jordan Steward got photos.

● Greg Majewski of Fort Wayne tried for the teal that afternoon without success but noted that the storms that had come through earlier in the day **"dropped TONS of migrants."**

There was almost too much to keep track of". His highlights were Golden-winged Warbler and both tanagers.

● The SAS early bird hike the next day was more productive than expected, given the forecasted heat. The Cinnamon Teal did not appear but many warblers plus a female Summer Tanager did. An Osprey was joined by an immature Red-shouldered Hawk. 40 species overall.

● The hour Early Bird Hike a week



later (with an extension by John Skene) turned up 60 species among them a Red-breasted Nuthatch & 9 species of Warbler including the first Yellow-rumped Warblers of the fall.

● John Skene visited the Pine Creek Gamebird Habitat Area in Benton County Oct 1. He had amazing luck **finding both a Nelson's Sparrow and two Harris' Sparrows.**

● **Brad Jackson visited White Co.'s** Camp Tecumseh with 7th graders on an Outdoor Education Camp. Their 46 species included Yellow-bellied sapsucker & Red-breasted Nuthatch.

● Lousy weather and only 24 species but nevertheless an interesting early bird walk Oct. 5 at Celery Bog with 58 Pied-bill Grebes, hundreds of teal & a flock of 107 Great Egrets

● .On an Oct 8 trip to Prophetstown SP, John Skene found both a Winter Wren and a Sedge Wren

● On the 12th Russ Allison watched a Yellow bellied Sapsucker busily drilling holes in his Sweet Gum tree.

● That same day Dorothy Jones got a nice view of a Cooper's Hawk on a **telephone wire. It's survey of the grassy strip wasn't interrupted by her** slowing the car and pulling over.

● People on the Early Bird Hike Oct. 12 got to see an Osprey proudly carrying a bright goldfish plus a scattering of late-ish birds including Gray Catbird, House Wren and Orange-crowned and Nashville Warblers.

● Six people had to gather at the Walmart Parking lot for the Oct 14th field trip as access to Celery Bog was blocked by the Purdue half-marathon race. They checked the Walmart area of the bog, Mulvey Pond & Benton Co.'s Pine Creek area. **At Mulvey**

they saw the nesting pair of Sandhill Cranes and along the way had a good scattering of raptors from Sharp-shinned Hawk to Northern Harrier.

Pine Creek produced both species of yellowlegs, Wilson's Snipe & Pectoral Sandpiper.

- A lone White Pelican and calling Broad-winged Hawk were reported at Celery Bog on Oct. 18 by Russ Allison.

- The next day 15 Greater White-fronted Geese greeted the Early Bird hikers. They later found the White Pelican in the northernmost basin by Walmart where it stayed and was seen by numerous birders during the next few weeks. They also had a male Red-head. Lastly Dillen Ng spotted an American Bittern which is rarely seen around the bog.

- Late Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were reported by a number of people in mid-October. The latest was seen by Chuck Tuttle on Oct. 21.

- Oct 24 Michael Levine spotted the first pintail of the fall at Celery Bog.

- Russ Allison reported his first Pine Siskins on the feeders Oct. 27. **The next day he watched a Cooper's Hawk** jump into the bushes where the House Sparrows were trying to hide.

- Nov 17th the International Crane Foundation asked Barny Dunning to check on five Whooping Cranes in northern Warren County. He found the birds (three adults and two chicks) which seemed to be fine.

- Barny went on an Early Bird hike Thanksgiving morning. His reward was 18 sleeping Ruddy Ducks, 46 Gadwall, and some American Black Ducks along with a Red-breasted Nuthatch. His feeders have had Pine siskins and on Wednesday there were 35 Sandhill Cranes circling over in the afternoon.

- Late Chipping Sparrows turned up **at both the Ulrich's and Del Arvin's** feeders in early November. Usually this species departs the area earlier.

- Susan Ulrich spotted an immature Golden Eagle in a field along South River Road Nov. 27. The bird was feeding on unidentified carrion. It flew off while she was watching, giving a view of its white rump and wing areas.

Wednesdays in the Wild

This series of programs is co-sponsored by Sycamore Audubon, the West-central Chapter of the Indiana Native Plant & Wildflower Society, NICHES Land Trust, Prophetstown State Park and the West Lafayette and Tippecanoe County Parks Departments. A new schedule is underway.

To a program by email or for a copy of *Native Roots* covering other environmental programs and activities, contact Joan Mohr Samuels **at** mohrsamuels@comcast.net.

Western Monarchs Imperiled

Backed by decades of data collected by the Xerces Society and many volunteers, A study published in the journal *Biological Conservation* estimates there's more than a 70% chance that western monarchs will go extinct within 20 years. The Monarch population west of the Rockies has plunged from 10-million to just 300,000. Those east of the Rockies migrate to Mexico for winter, while their western counterparts cluster on California's coast. In 2014 the Xerces Society and others petitioned for federal protections for all monarchs. The Trump administration is under court order to decide on protections in 2019.

Arizona Jaguar Update

This fall the first video footage of a jaguar living in the Chiricahua Mountains of southern Arizona was released. The cat has been named *Sombra*, Spanish for "shadow," by middle-school students at Tucson's Paulo Freire Freedom School.

This jaguar appears to be the same one photographed in the nearby Dos Cabezas Mountains in November 2016. Its gender is unknown. "This beautiful cat has now appeared in images taken seven months apart," said the Center for Biodiversity's Randy Serraglio. **"It has apparently established residence in excellent habitat more than 50 miles north of the border."**

[Arctic Refuge drilling continued from page 1:](#)

propose opening in the refuge. **But market data says that won't happen.** When last year bids were in, Alaska state officials were ecstatic at the biggest sale in years. Their take? — an average of \$28.17 per acre, or about one percent of what is projected for the Arctic Refuge in the budget.

Still not convinced? The Trump and Senate budgets also assume companies will bid on every one of the 1.5 million acres they plan to open. But between 2010 and 2015, industry bid on only 1.5 percent to 5.5 percent of the acres offered in the National Petroleum Reserve — **an area that's five times** the size of Massachusetts. Even in the 2016 NPR lease sale — touted as a banner year — industry leased just 42 percent of the acres offered.

And a final data point: in order to meet the budget targets to fill the federal coffers, you have to double all of the revenue because half goes to the state of Alaska. So that means the Senate is being asked to endorse a plan that will generate \$2 billion in order to make its \$1 billion number.

There isn't a freshman-level business class in America that would look at this case and say it makes sense. America's oil companies are being recruited (reportedly against their own better judgment) to wreck the largest unbroken stretch of wilderness in America — in order to do what? To buy less than half of the available leases at a tenth of the budgeted amount, and then ship that oil overseas because there's already a glut in the U.S.?

Never mind what's wrong with this picture. What's right with it?



News from National Audubon

For three year in a row now, Audubon has received Charity Navigator's highest rating of four stars. Charity Navigator is America's largest and most-utilized independent evaluator of charities.

Being a four star charity means Audubon is an organization that adheres to superior best practices for non-profit governance, accountability and transparency that exceed the industry standards. It also means you can trust Audubon to consistently **work hard to execute it's mission** to protect birds and their habitats all across the Americas in a fiscally responsible, efficient way.

Colorado Water

Birds and people that live along the Colorado River delta have gotten a second reprieve. After years of painstaking negotiation, delegates for the United States and Mexico signed Minute 323, the latest refinement on a 1944 treaty managed by the International Boundary & Water Commission, that dictates how water is managed across the shared U.S.-Mexico border.

Minute 319, signed in 2012, was the last that involved environmental sharing of water. It promised a series of flows from 2014-2017. This latest agreement secures commitments from both countries to improve water conservation in the Colorado River basin; Audubon was actively involved in the negotiations to ensure water sustainability was addressed in any new treaty language.

Great Lake Threat Waiting in Wings

The National Wildlife Federation (NWF), reports there is a decaying pipeline under the Great Lakes that threatens wildlife, wild lands, and drinking water for up to 40 million people.

A legal loophole has allowed this pipeline— **Enbridge's Line 5**—to operate illegally for decades in a compromised state. NWF wants that loophole closed to ensure illegally operated oil pipelines like Line 5 do **not threaten America's treasured** waterways and the wildlife and the communities that depend on them.

The threat to the Great Lakes from Line 5 is incredibly real. In the last 49 years, the Line 5 pipeline has leaked 29 times and spilled over *7 million* gallons of oil on land. Imagine the consequences of such spills in the Great Lakes: endangered birds like the piping plover unable to nest along the shore, fish killed off by the oily waters, and animals like river otters starved as their homes are irreparably destroyed.

And those are just wildlife impacts — the harm to communities dependent on the Great Lakes for drinking water and their economy could be catastrophic.

It's foolish to stand by and wait until disaster happens. People need to ensure Line 5 and other illegally **operated oil pipelines can't continue** to threaten our waterways and the wildlife and communities that depend on them.

Hurricane Harvey & NAS

Long-time NAS Volunteer Killed

Three Audubon Chapters in Texas experienced damage from Hurricane Harvey: Coastal Bend, the Golden Triangle, and the Houston Audubon Society.

The latter suffered the most, with damage to a number of its properties. It also lost a longtime dedicated volunteer, Agnes Stanley, who

was killed by the storm. Among her other volunteer services, Agnes taught preschoolers in the Titmouse **Club at Houston Audubon Society's** Edith L. Moore Nature Sanctuary. The Audubon family extends their heartfelt condolences to her family and to Houston Audubon.

Correction:

In the last Warbler, there was a typo in the date the first Marbled Murrelet nest was found. It was in 1974 not 1984.

Endangered Status Denied

In the high mountains of Idaho and Montana, a small mammal of the forest called the "Fisher" is fighting for survival

These shy, furry animals — related to minks and otters — have been decimated over the decades by killing, development and climate change. In Montana the Fisher is still allowed to be trapped.

If Northern Rocky Mountain Fishers are going to survive as a species, they need emergency help — the kind that only the Endangered Species Act can provide. But the Fisher, along with 24 other imperiled species, including the Walrus, were just denied that status by the Trump administration, putting these elusive mammals and the two dozen other species for which endangered species status was requested on an increased track toward extinction.



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 Audubon Society's (NAS)** national conservation efforts by becoming an official member of NAS (\$20). Contact SAS's membership chair for information. When you join NAS, you receive *Audubon* magazine **along with automatic chapter membership in SAS**. Since NAS dues primarily support national projects, we encourage national members to ALSO become Friends of SAS. As a Friend, you give directly to our local chapter and its projects.

SAS Chapter Membership Application **Date:** _____

Name : _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone(s): _____

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 Friend member ☐ Renewing Friend

I would prefer to receive the chapter newsletter by ☐ email ☐ paper

☐ **Additional contribution to SAS for** _____ \$ _____

Total enclosed \$ _____

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Upcoming INPAWS Programs

The West Central Indiana Native Plant & Wildlife Society meets at 7 p.m. in Lilly Nature Center. Programs are open to the public. Free parking, including handicapped parking is available and refreshments are served.

January 22: **Natural Areas in the Lafayette Park System.** Don Staley, Natural Resources & Recreation Planner, Lafayette Parks & Recreation.

February 26 **The Morel.** Steve Russell, president, Hoosier Mushroom Society.

March 26 **Saving the Monarch.** Barb Lucas, Naturalist and Photographer,

April 23 **To be announced.**

Colorado use of M 44's Halted & Turtle Season for Texas

In response to a lawsuit from the WildEarth Guardians and the Center for Biological Diversity, the USDA's Wildlife Service has agreed to temporarily halt their use of M-44s — deadly, exploding cyanide capsules employed to kill wild animals — while it completes a new environmental analysis.

Also in response to the lawsuit, the USDA won't participate, fund, or approve hunting or trapping of black bears or mountain lions as part of a questionable study of those species effects on mule deer.

Texas Wildlife officials have agreed to propose a rule to end unlimited commercial trapping of the state's wild freshwater turtles after a petition was filed by the Center and its partners. Unregulated commercial collection is depleting turtle populations, including those of rare species that may already be at risk of extinction. For several years the Center has been urging states to tighten their trapping regulations and has secured significant wins for turtles in Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Missouri and New York.

Tidbits

♦ Of all the fresh water around the globe, 1 out of every 5 gallons is in the Great Lakes.

♦ For each \$1 invested in lead paint hazard control there is an estimated savings of \$221 in health care costs and social and behavioral costs due to loss of IQ.

♦ In south-east Australia where an area hit temperatures of 107F degrees, thousands of dead bats rained down from the trees.

♦ Praying mantises are the only insects able to swivel their heads and stare at you. Their piercing eyes are much like ours, equipped with 3-D vision and a fovea — a centralized concentration of light receptors — the better to focus and track.

♦ The larger the bird, the stronger its egg shell (it has to be strong enough to withstand the weight of the bird). It takes about 26 lbs. of pressure to break a swan's egg).

♦ Rufous hummingbird eggs are ½ inch long.

♦ The grub in galls found on Canada Gold-enrod stems is nearly all fat plus some protein. It is a tasty treat for birds such as the Tufted Titmouse and Downy Woodpecker who peck open the gall to eat the grub.



Sycamore Audubon Society
P. O. Box 2716
West Lafayette, IN 47996

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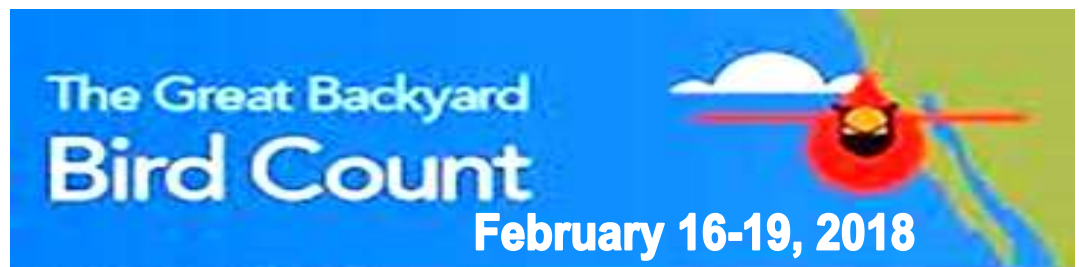
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A subscription is included with membership in National Audubon or Sycamore Audubon Society.



For information about this international count go to BirdCount.org. Every thing you need to know to participate and record your sightings is there. The count is sponsored by National Audubon, the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology & Bird Studies Canada.

Participating is simple: to take part, get your binocular and watch your feeders, or head out to a birding location. Then record the birds you see and report them. You can do the same areas each of the four days, different areas each day, or multiple areas on one or more days. Report your sightings for each day and location separately.

In 2017, Great Backyard Bird Count participants in more than 100 countries counted more than 6,200 species of birds (well over half the world's species) on more than 180,000 checklists!

