



# Sycamore Warbler

Volume 44 Issue 1 Spring 2019

## LWCF Passes Senate & House by Wide Margins

**Great news for Audubon members.** On February 13th the U.S. Senate voted 92-8 to support passage of the Natural Resources Management Act. Included in the bill was a measure to permanently reauthorize the expired *Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)*—a *huge* Audubon priority—along with PERMANENT funding for the LWCF. This latter prevents funds being siphoned off and lost to the general treasury (\$22 billion has 'disappeared' in the bill's 50-year history). The funding level is set at that approved in 1978. On April 26 the House voted on the measure and, by an overwhelming margin of 363 to 62, passed the bill which now goes to the President for signing.

LWCF is one of the best deals for conservation, providing matching funds for conservation and land acquisition across the nation. It was created as an offset for energy development.

## If it is May, it must be....

... time to clean your binoculars and get out to enjoy the neotropical migrants and returning nesters. Most years the best weekend to see the maximum number of species in Indiana is the 2nd Saturday in May—not coincidentally the day the May Bird Count is held across Indiana. This year's date is May 11th.

Count boundaries are the same as county boundaries. SAS hosts two local counts, one in Tippecanoe compiled by Barny Dunning, and one in Warren by Susan Ulrich. Please contact them if you can help out as they can use more eyes in the field and at feeders (contact info on p. 9). They will get you the forms you need and assign you an area to make sure people don't cover the same place (and skew bird numbers). Or sign up at the May 11th program meeting. If you see something unusual that day, give them a call to let them know where and what you found. No one else may have seen it. The Tippecanoe Count holds a compilation party that night at 9 p.m. so people can hear how everyone's day went and add up the numbers.



## National Audubon Society Opposes Loss of Important Bird Habitat Because of Border Wall

Construction is immediately set to begin on a section of a border wall at the National Butterfly Sanctuary in Mission, Texas, and threatens to close Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park in Texas, part of the World Birding Center, which hosts over 500 bird species. National Audubon Society has a position statement on this issue:

**"As the voice of birds and as a community-builder for 114 years, Audubon opposes the construction of structures along the border that would:**

- destroy or fragment important bird habitat like Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park, iconic National Wildlife Refuges like Santa Ana NWR in Texas, National Parks, National Forests, other public lands, or protected wetlands;
- block migration corridors for 111 endangered species, and 108 species of migratory birds;
- damage habitat for over 500 species of birds;
- create or worsen environmental risks like flooding that would threaten birds and people;
- result in waiving or weakening bedrock environmental protections, including the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and other National Environmental Policy Acts;
- diminish outdoor recreation and ecotourism opportunities;
- sever connections between communities and natural resources;
- harm the communities, landowners, tribes, or organizations with whom we partner and among whom we serve."

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Read the Full Statement on ***Audubon.org***

# CHAPTER NEWS

## Busy Time

Spring is always busy but take time to get out and savor it (once it **finally starts...**) and **enjoy the many** birds that flow through our state. SAS offers opportunities to see and learn to identify old bird friends and new. Check the calendar for field **trips and don't forget Celery Bog's Thursday morning's Early Bird hikes.**

## Helpers Needed for Sale

**SAS's next Bake and Plant Sale** is March 29 to April 1 at the West Lafayette Public Library. Funds raised will go for the Mayflower Mill Outdoor Schoolyard and the Indiana Non-game Wildlife Fund (which gave us back the American Eagle). Donations to this fund are matched in part by the Federal Government).

We need cashiers. Last year staffing got pretty iffy. Let Susan Ulrich know if you can help out on Friday night from 6:30-8:30 or for a couple of hours Saturday between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. or Sunday between 1 and 5 p.m.

Plants can be dropped off from Wednesday afternoon on, and baked goods starting on Friday. Call or email Susan (p.11) if you need plant pots, have any questions, can help at the booth, or need to make special arrangements for donations.

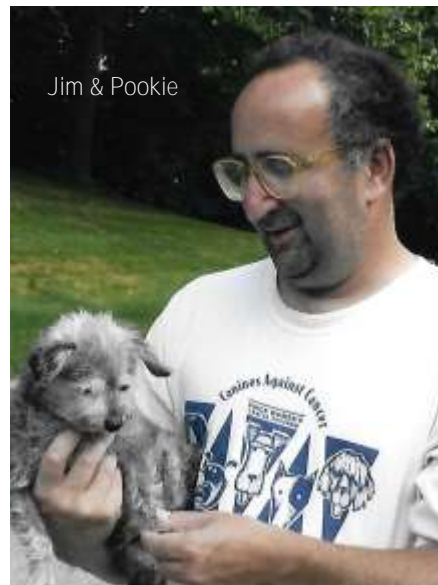
## Garden Expo April 27

**Tippecanoe Master Gardener's** Garden Expo is a big event for plant lovers and SAS and the Indiana Native Plant Society (new name for **what had been the "Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society"**) will

have a joint booth to sell plants and other garden equipment.

We need donations and people to help at the booth. Funds go for removing invasive plants in local parks. Over 2,000 buyers attend each year making it a great venue to not only raise funds, but also provide information to the community.

**If you like gardening you'll like** Expo. There are dozens of vendors, door prizes, plant lectures, and free admission. Hours are 9 am - 3 pm. Contact Susan Ulrich if you can help.



## In Memory: Jim Klatch

Audubon and the environment lost a friend November 27 (giving Tuesday) when Jim Klatch, a long-time Audubon member who once **served on SAS's board passed away.**

Jim was a big supporter of our environmental education efforts. You will have noticed his name appearing in the thank-you's of all the issues of this newsletter. Every quarter he

would contribute to the Pookie Fund which he started after his beloved dog, Pookie, died at the age of 23.

He and Pookie were regulars at the chapters Bird Seed Sales. Jim would help load the seed while little Pookie charmed the buyers. Jim requested his ashes be scattered on NICHES properties. A small get together to do that was held at Clegg Gardens on February 24th which **would have been Jim's 61st birthday).**

## Fifth Grade Bird Hikes

**This year's Audubon bird hikes for West Lafayette's 5th Graders are** Tuesday, April 20 and Thursday, May 2. We can always use a few more people to help. The school supplies binoculars and a teacher for each **group. "Expert' birding status isn't** required. Lafayette area helpers can carpool at Celery Bog at 6 a.m. or meet others at the Whitetail Lodge at Camp Tecumseh at 7 a.m. Stay for **breakfast afterwards if you'd like.**

## Thank You's

Our thanks to Judy Marten and George Kopcha in appreciation of their extra financial donations to the chapter since the last newsletter.

## Pull, Pull, Destroy

Spring is the season to get rid of Garlic Mustard, an invasive non-native biennial that needs to be pulled before its seed matures. The RIP Squad will be taking it out at Celery Bog, Michaud-Sinninger Woods, Happy **Hollow Park, Ross Hills, and Prophet's Rock.** They would love to have your help if you can make one of the pulls.

Start date is Tuesday, March 12, at Celery Bog (if spring has sprung), From 3-5 p.m. Each Tuesday will be spent at various WL parks. Thursday will alternate between two County **Parks: Prophet's Rock and Ross Hills.**

## Birding on the *Fly List*...

If there is an unusual bird sighting nearby or around the state Barny sends people on the list an email so anyone interested can pursue the bird by themselves or often via a carpool. Contact him to be added to the list. See page 9.

Extra tools and gloves are available.

Email Patty Jones at [removeinvasiveplants@WCINPS@gmail.com](mailto:removeinvasiveplants@WCINPS@gmail.com) for a schedule or pick one up at Lilly Nature Center. Hours are 3-5 on both Tuesdays and Thursdays—but you can go out on your own at any time.

## 573 RIP Hours in 2018

RIP volunteers spent a lot of hours removing invasive plants in Tippecanoe County last year. The core group of a half-dozen “regulars” were grateful for the help of others. In particular thanks go to Alpha Phi Omega and the Purdue Women’s Club Volunteer Group for their help.

Special events included Earth Day Sunday, when Mary Cutler led a group of 30 Boiler Green Initiative, Alpha Phi Omega, and Boiler OUT students, removing honeysuckle and burning bush at Prophet’s Rock woods. In September a group of 25 from Alpha Phi Omega tackled winter creeper in Happy Hollow Park, led by Nick Harby and Patty Jones. August saw a group of 5 people led by Nick Harby remove Purple Loosestrife at Lafayette’s Footbridge Park.

## Westminster Village Talk

Susan Ulrich gave a talk on *The Birds of Tippecanoe County* to a large group of Westminster Village residents on Feb. 23.

## Family Winter Walk

Rick Read led a bird hike Sunday, **March 3 in Monticello’s Altherr Nature Park**. The walk ended with hot drinks for all and with a lucky participant winning a bird book.

## Earth Day Monticello

Here is the Saturday, April 27 line-up of Earth Day events in Monticello sent in by Rick Read who will lead some of the hikes:

7:30-9:30 am: Bird Walk, starting at City Park followed by Altherr Nature Park. Bring binoculars or use ours.

1:00-3:00 pm: Earth Day Activities at City Park, brought to you by several entities. The birding table will have coloring pages, field guides to review and binoculars to try out, plus lists of nesting structures and bird check lists.

9:00-9:30 pm: Owling, City Park, to see what owls can be found after dark. Binoculars available.

## More SAS Outreach

Chuck Tuttle, SAS membership chairman and a long-time board member, will be giving a talk at the Colfax Library in March and another talk at Aster Place in April.

Chuck’s wife and daughter got him a new camera in December.

He’s taking lots of bird pictures so look to see some next September.

## Saw Whet Owl Banding

SAS’s board voted to buy a new sound amplifier for the Saw Whet Owl banding project initiated a few years ago. Banding will be done during spring and fall migrations.

A question was raised if using the equipment to play Purple Martin songs could attract the birds to nesting structures. The consensus was that there was a good chance it would.

## Ross Reserve Bird Event

Graduate students in the Biology Department will hold a special bird outreach in April (date not yet set) at the Ross Reserve Biological Station and have asked for SAS’s help. Ask Barny if you’d like details (see p.11).

# Celebrate Wetlands Month May 18 at Mind BOGgling Event

May 18 is the date for this year’s Mind BOGgling event at Celery Bog Nature Park. As the birding hot spot of the area (and in spite of its small size the 5th best in the STATE!), Celery Bog deserves a day of celebration. SAS will be there to help make sure this one is a success.

SAS usually hosts a table with information on birds along with hands on materials for children (and adults). The Mind BOGgling event is family-oriented and lots of children show up to soak up information and do crafts and play learning games. There will many activities and displays. The Emergency Munchie Truck will be there as usual to supply eats for those who want them. Come out and stop by at the Audubon display to say “Hi”.

The first planning session is March 12th at 1 p.m. at Lilly Nature Center. If you would like to be there to help represent Sycamore Audubon Society and contribute ideas, your input would be welcomed.



Celery Bog  
Photo by Chuck Tuttle



# CONSERVATION NEWS

## Insect Decline A Major Threat

A world without insects would be both sad and terrorizing, causing a collapse of human food systems, and a planet covered in dung and rotting carcasses. **That's what scientists warn is coming if insect populations keep declining at their current rate.**

Up to 40 percent of all insect species may go extinct over the next few decades, according to a global scientific review published in *Biological Conservation*. **The result, according to the authors, would be a "catastrophic collapse of nature's ecosystems."** Insects play a vital role in pollinating plants and disposing of organic waste. They are the only food source for many species of birds, plus fish, mammals, and amphibians. Without insects, food chains would collapse.

**What's causing the decline?** The report points to habitat loss, pesticides, and climate change as the major factors. One class of pesticides known as neonicotinoids especially. Some countries are beginning to ban their uses.

Neonics (short for neonicotinoids) were first developed in the late 1990s and have become the most widely used class of insecticides in the world. In the U.S. the EPA approved their use on more than 120 food crops — fruits, vegetables, soy, corn, canola, grains — **to kill insect pests. "It's a 21st-century insecticide that makes the plant itself, including the pollen and nectar, toxic for insects," according to Loarie, an attorney with the environmental organization Earthjustice. "We're just starting to realize all the implications."**

The report states major changes are needed in the industrial agriculture system: **"The conclusion is clear: unless we change our ways of producing food, insects as a whole will go down the path of extinction in a few decades,"** — Unusually strong words for scientists.

## Less Plastic at Trader Joe's

**Trader Joe's just announced a plan to eliminate 1 million pounds of single-use plastic from its stores in 2019.** A step in the right direction, but more to go.

The store has committed to stop offering single-use carryout bags nationwide, replace its produce bags with biodegradable and/or compostable options, replace Styrofoam trays used in packaging, and sell more loose produce.

This is in response to customer concerns about the oceanic plastic crisis. The five trillion pieces of plastic in our oceans can circle the world 400 times. The United Nations Environment Program estimates hundreds of thousands of sea creatures are killed each year by plastic waste.



## Wolves Stripped of Protection

After 4 decades of work to reestablish wolf populations, the administration announced on March 6 that they are pulling the plug on **America's wolves. Their plan strips** ESA protection from nearly every wolf in the lower 48 states.

If their plan holds, it means a return to the days when wolves were shot on sight, caught in steel traps, strangled in snares and whole families poisoned in their dens. Law suits are being filed to challenge the plan.

## HEC Legislative Action

**Indiana's legislative session is half over.** The Hoosier Environmental Council has budget items and **bills they need the public's help to push through or defeat.** You can find your legislators at

<http://bitly.com/INLegis>.

**Pro: Drinking Water.** Support an IDEM funding increase to hire a 12 **people to help oversee Indiana's** 4,000+ public drinking water systems. (IDEM's budget is down 33% since 2007).

**Pro: Wild Lands & Wildlife.** Outdoor recreation adds \$16-billion to **Indiana's economy but state funding** for land protection has plummeted. Ask Senators to support raising funding to \$10-million per year for the next two years.

**Oppose: Threat to local Control of Environmental Protection.** HB1266 would remove local **government's ability to control** stormwater pollution in excess of **the state's very minimal standards.**

**Pro: Renewable Energy.** HB1331. Ask your senators to support reducing regulatory burdens on potential solar panel owners who reside in Homeowners Associations.

**Oppose: Reduction in Regulatory Review.** HB 1470. Ask your senators to vote no. This bill weakens the power of the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission to properly regulate utility monopolies. Essentially utility companies will have a blank check to set rate increases.

**Pro: Gerrymandering.** SB105. Ask your Representative to support this bill and to request Rep. Wesco, Chair of the House Elections Committee, to give the bill a hearing. SB105 gives clearer guidance on how lawmakers should draw fair legislative & congressional maps. **It isn't the perfect bill, but it is an improvement over doing nothing.**

# Spring Sycamore Audubon Calendar 2019

**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.**

- March 14  
Thursday *Program: Jeop-birdy.* Come and test your avian skills playing one of the world's most beloved game shows, hosted by Wes Homoya, birder, tour guide, conservationist and ex-SAS board member, etc. His employments as a bird company tour leader have taken him to Maui, Brazil, Galapagos, Hungary, Australia... 7:15 p.m. Lilly Nature Center, Celery Bog Park, WL. Refreshments and free parking.
- March 16  
Saturday Audubon at the Overlook. **Let's see what birds the winds of March brought back. Meet at the end of the road at Prophetstown State park at 3 p.m.** We will spend two hours around the overlook to see what flies by and talk to park visitors.
- March 21 &  
each Thursday Early Bird Walks at Celery Bog. These weekly 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 Nature Park through spring migration to enjoy the company, learn to i.d. new birds, and see the old favorites that each week brings.
- March 29-31  
Friday-Sunday Conservation Bake & Plant Sale. 6:30-8:30 Fri, 10-5 Sat; 1-5 Sun. Donations of plants, food items, garden equipment, bird houses, etc. needed to sell. See p. 2 for more info. CASHIERS NEEDED. Funds are going to the Indiana Non-game Wildlife Fund and for the Mayflower Mills Outdoor Schoolyard.
- April 6  
Saturday Celery Bog, Early Spring Migrants. April showers bring new birds as well as May flowers. Meet at 7:30 at the gravel parking lot (first right after entering Celery Bog Nature Park).
- April 11  
Thursday *Program: Birding from a German Point of View.* Ann Marie Ackerman, ex-SAS member who lives in **Germany. Learn what she's been up to and what birding is like in Germany.** Lilly Nature Center, Celery Bog Park, WL 7:15 p.m. Free parking & refreshments.
- April 13  
Saturday Pine Creek Gamebird Habitat Area, Benton County. We haven't had a field trip to this 150 acre restored **wetland in a while. What we'll find will depend on water levels, but there could be migrating ducks or shorebirds** and it is usually good for raptors. Meet at 7:30 am at the gravel parking lot, Celery Bog Nature Park, to car pool. Half day trip.
- April 27  
Saturday Earth Day in Monticello. Series of activities to help celebrate Earth Day 2019. See the schedule provided by Rick Read on page 3. Contact him if you have any questions. See p. 11
- April 27  
Saturday Garden Expo 2019. Plants, lectures, all sorts of garden items. In the Swine Barn at the Tippecanoe Co. Fairgrounds 10-3 p.m. Come buy a plant or two, or donate a plant or two. See more on p.2. HELP needed.
- April 30 & May  
2 Tues/Thurs Fifth Grade Bird Hikes at Camp Tecumseh. A few more helpers would be nice. See page 3. Meet at 6 a.m. at Celery Bog gravel parking area to carpool or go on your own & meet at 7 a.m. at White Tail Lodge.
- May 4  
Saturday Prophetstown State Park. **Help get your eyes and ears back in 'birding' shape for the Big Day event next week.** The 7 a.m. early start will let us work on some of the songs. First two hours will be spent at the Overlook at the end of the Park Road. Then we will explore and bird some of the trails. Half-day.
- May 9  
Thursday ***Program: Citizen's Climate Lobby.*** Learn about the activities of the local group and what they've been doing to enact a revenue-neutral fee on carbon that is rebated back to American households. This may be the most innovative and effective proposal to address climate change that has broad political support. The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2018 has been introduced in Congress to address this concept. 7:15p.m. Lilly Nature Center. Free parking and refreshments.
- May 11  
Saturday The Big Day in May Bird Count. An International Migratory Bird Day event. Groups (& individuals) spread out over Tippecanoe & Warren counties looking for birds to record. Tippecanoe counters gather for a compilation party that evening to find out what people saw. Contact the compilers for details (see p.1) and/or sign up to help at the May 9th Member's meeting to get your own territory and forms. There is **always more area to cover than people to do it, so don't be shy. All day for as many hours as you wish.**
- May 18  
Saturday Mind BOGgling Event. **Celery Bog Park from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Family friendly. Come out to see what's going on.** Live animal presentation and much more. Agenda is not yet set, so watch for the flier.
- June 1  
Saturday Audubon at the Overlook. Prophetstown State Park. Meet at the parking lot at the end of the central paved road through the park at 6:30 am to look and listen for grassland birds, summer nesters, and late spring migrants.

## ESA Listing Gives Positive Results

More than 75% of marine mammals and sea turtles protected by the Endangered Species Act (ESA) are recovering, according to a new peer-reviewed study by scientists at the Center for Biological Diversity.

The study, published by the academic journal *PLOS ONE*, is a key addition to other Center studies tracking the Act's success. For example, the numbers of North Atlantic green sea turtle nests on Florida beaches have increased more than 2,000% since the species was protected under the ESA. In addition Hawaiian humpback whales increased more than 1,100% percent between 1979 and 2005.

"The Endangered Species Act not only saved whales, sea turtles, sea otters and manatees from extinction — it dramatically increased population numbers, putting them solidly on the road to full recovery," said the Center's Shaye Wolf, one of the study's coauthors.



Green Sea Turtle

Did you know you can subscribe for free to *BirdWire*, a publication of Bird Watcher's Digest?

Simply go to [birdwatchersdigest.com/birdwire](http://birdwatchersdigest.com/birdwire), They will send two emails a month, one a bird quiz, the other with interesting and important bird and bird watching news gleaned by the Birdwatchers Digest staff.

## Suing for 26 More ESA Species Listings

When something works well, expand it. The ESA does work to help save endangered animals and plants (see above), but every day that protection is delayed is one day closer to extinction. That's why the Center for Biological Diversity filed a notice of intent to sue the Trump administration for failing to make protection decisions for 26 species under the Endangered Species Act.



Above: American Wolverine

In 2016 a plan developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service promised decisions on protecting the rare and vanishing American Wolverine, Franklin's Bumblebee, elfin woods warbler, Miami Tiger Beetles, and the other 22 species. But the federal government has dropped the ball on that promise.

"Political interference and neglect are pushing every one of these species toward the brink of extinction," said the Center's Noah Greenwald. "That needs to end now."

## Floraton II

The local chapter of the Indiana Native Plant Society will host a team to compete in this year's INPS state Floraton. The Floraton is a charity event to raise money for Letha's Fund which gives grants for native plant projects and field trips for children. You can support the local team to help this effort. Donations can be a flat amount or a pledge of a set amount for each species found. Last year the local *Trillium* team of Mary Sue Waser, Margareta Fong, & Susan Ulrich found 50 some species.

The rules are simple. Each team picks a date between April 13 and May 12 to go out and see how many blooming native plants they can find. Only native species included in Kay Yatskievych's *Field Guide to Indiana Wildflowers* count. In other words, blooming trees, shrubs, ferns sedges, rushes, grasses, and non-native species aren't included.

Plant progression and how long plants bloom will depend on the weather. Several warm days can shorten a plant's flowering time from a few weeks to a few days.

## Native Plant Society Name Change + Local Programs of Interest

As of January 1, 2019, the group previously known as the "Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society" (INPAWS), has a new name: the "Indiana Native Plant Society" (INPS). The new web address is [IndianaNativePlants.org](http://IndianaNativePlants.org), and the generic emails to officers, etc. have changed from 'name of office'@inpaws.org, to 'name of office'@IndianaNativePlant.org. (for example: president@IndianaNativePlants.org).

### Local Spring Programs:

March 25 Dragonflies! (Loyce Fandrei) Loyce's great photographs of dragonflies accompany and help document her efforts to expand the lists of dragonfly species found in Indiana counties. 7 p.m. Lilly Nature Center

April 22 Wildflowers of the Yukon (Mary Sue Waser) Arctic plant life seen on a two-week rafting trip taken by Mary Sue and her husband, Peter, in the Canadian section of the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. 7 p.m. Lilly Nature Center.

# Indiana Dunes 2019 Birding Festival

**This is Indiana's Major Birding Festival and well worth attending.**



Canada Warbler: one of the later spring migrating warblers.

Held in the Indiana Dunes area to take advantage of the great birding along Lake Michigan, the dates for this year's festival are May 16 to 19.

There's so much going on—great speakers (Laura Erickson is the keynote speaker) and programs, field trips, etc.—**that we don't have room to list it all.** But there will be morning bird tours including pelagic tours on Lake Michigan; daily headliner presentations; a Birds & Brew evening social event; night hikes; live birds of prey, a migration marketplace; the Dunes *Birds in Art* exhibition; a silent

auction; and a youth and family birding day.

Go to the web page to see for yourself. You need to sign up for some of the events and some cost money. Slots fill quickly so don't delay. SAS is a sponsor, and at least one member, Rick Read, will be leading several of the field trips. Website **[indunesbirdingfestival.com](http://indunesbirdingfestival.com)**

## The Effects of Warming in the Midwest

A global warming report released by Trump's own administration predicts several severe outcomes for Hoosiers' health and the Hoosier economy.

The findings of the National Climate Assessment, the 1,600-page report released last year, support several conclusions reached in an earlier report by the Purdue University Climate Change Research Center. Specifically, Hoosiers and residents across the Midwest can expect:

1. increased flooding that will strain infrastructure;
2. warmer, more humid conditions that will increase disease and worsen air quality;
3. reduced agricultural yields caused by heat, pests, extreme weather events and a shifting growing season.
4. a substantial loss of human life.

The last is probably the most startling revelation. Indiana and the rest of the Midwest will experience the largest increase of heat-related deaths in the country — as many as 2,000 additional premature deaths per year by 2090 just caused by the projected increase in temperatures.

Increased flooding, pathogens, mental stress, reduced air quality, and the northward movement of tropical diseases will all take a toll. The Purdue report released in 2018 found Hoosiers could be at greater risk for malaria and Zika, for example. In 2017 in Marion County 10 days of air quality were classified as unhealthy. That number will climb. As for farmers, heavy spring and fall rains may reduced days in the field and heat and humidity will aid crop pests and diseases. Hardwood forests will grow less and widespread die-offs are likely.

Time is ticking. The highest weekly average of carbon dioxide ever measured was recorded in Hawaii recently-- **412.4 PPM (last year's high point was 411.3, in May).** The earth hasn't seen those levels in two million years. All indications are that 2019 will be a record-breaking year for climate disasters.

## Prizes for Birding?!

Really? You can win prizes Just for doing what you love?



**It's true. Take part in Indiana**

Audubon Amazing Bird Race for 2019. Locate the birds in the special bird groups from Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2019 then send in your game-card by January 8, 2020 to be eligible for prizes from their great partners and prize sponsors. You can be eligible for each special drawing for each bird group you complete.

Go to: [indianaaudubon.org/audubonbirdrace/](http://indianaaudubon.org/audubonbirdrace/) to download the game card

## Gov. Holcomb proclaims April 7-13 Invasive Species Awareness Week

Indiana now has an *Invasive Species Awareness Week* thanks to Governor Holcomb. The week is in recognition of the increasing costs and problems invasive species cause in the state, affecting landowners, farmers and outdoor recreation activities.

Invasives also have a negative effect globally, 300 of 953 species extinctions occurred partially due to alien exotic species and 42% of the extinctions were caused directly by them. Exotic species are believed to contribute to 25% of the plant extinctions and 33% of the world's animal extinctions.

### You can HELP

The local RIP squad has two opportunities during Invasive Awareness Week that you can help with One is April 9 at Michaud Sinninger Woods (Cumberland & Salisbury) a West Lafayette City Park, from 3-5. **The other is April 11 at Prophet's Rock**, a Tippecanoe County Park near Battleground, from 3-5.

Follow the **three R's** for invasives: Recognize, Report, and Remove. The local RIP squad can help you assess what invasives are on your property and how best to control them. Contact info on p. 3.



# Nature Notes & News

## Big waterfowl numbers and movements this period.

Male Evening Grosbeak  
Photo by Rick Read



flocks  
flew by  
and a  
white-  
phase  
Ross's

Goose came in for a landing. The majority of diving ducks were Lesser Scaup, Redheads and Ring-necked Ducks. Red-winged Blackbirds were calling on territory. Overall a nice taste of spring.

● A bit later that same day Barny saw a dozen Turkey Vultures flying over downtown Lafayette, his first of spring but several people on that morning's field trip had mention they were back.

● Fritz Davis had 5 different geese species and 13 duck species at Celery Bog on Feb. 24.

● A Barred Owl called in Happy Hollow Park Feb. 27 to Karen Griggs' delight. She hadn't heard any calling in 2018.

● Feb. 28th Jackie Boudreaux had a nice sized flock of Sandhill Cranes fly over the Purdue campus .

● March 1 Prophetstown State Park had a lot to offer Larry & Becky Theller. Clouds of ducks moved along the two rivers. There were 6 Bald Eagles around, at least 500 Mallards, flocks of Gadwalls and Wood Ducks plus some Northern Shovelers and a Red-breasted Merganser. Sandhills were flying overhead. Nine Killdeer and 400 crows topped off a great day.

● Ton that same day Celery Bog was overrun with White-fronted Geese. Barny Dunning spent 40 minutes tallying at least 1,000 of them. With them were two of the small Cackling Geese, 1 Snow/Ross's Goose and lots of Redheads and Ring-necked Ducks.

● The next day at Celery Bog John Skene had 40 species led by 2,500 Greater White-fronted Geese (and 850 Canada). He found 12 species of ducks but his best bird was a lone Horned Grebe.

● John Skene spent half an hour at the Indiana Manufacturer's Institute Pond Dec. 1st and was rewarded by a Snow Goose and 2 Ross's Geese mixed in with the Canada Geese.

● In Dec, Matt Williams who lives near Crawfordsville had a variety of winter finches including 5 Evening Grosbeaks—the only ones reported in the area this winter. A number of people went to see them.

● While looking for a Short-eared Owl near Ash Grove on Dec. 20, Barny Dunning, and Larry & Becky Theller found a Snowy Owl instead. It was just inside Tippecanoe County but 200 yards outside the CBC circle.

● The Ulrich's feeders were plagued by accipiters this winter: a Cooper's Hawk & a Sharp-shinned kept bird populations leery. But Wild Turkeys weren't worried. 16 Males showed up Dec. 27, followed by 6 females on the 29th. Small groups of males, females & jakes kept appearing through Feb 9.

● A big flock of Snow Geese were seen flying west to east on Feb. 3 along the Warren-Tippecanoe County line. Susan Ulrich saw an estimated 1,100 to 1,200 birds: 90% were white phase, 10% blue.

● A look at the CBC results (p. 10) confirm this was a Red-breasted Nuthatch year. Both Chuck Tuttle and Susan Ulrich had at least two of these small tame birds all winter. They were still present on March 11.

● Jan 4 Barny Dunning mentioned the waterfowl at Celery Bog would get your year list off to a good start. Chuck Tuttle and Lisa Judge saw a

Canvasback, and Barny saw the male Redhead seen by Chuck the day before. The main show were the Greater White-fronted Geese. Barny saw 74 in the basin near Walmart in the a.m. and Chuck reported 100's flying overhead later that day. Multiple groups of American Black Duck, Gadwall and Ring-necked Duck were also in the mix along with one male Green-winged Teal.

● Braving Jan 10's cold, Chuck Tuttle and Barny Dunning spent an hour checking waterfowl at the Bog. In spite of 90% ice cover some birds were active. A male Canvasback and female Bufflehead were in the open water across from the southern observation deck. 15 Greater White-fronted Geese were also present.

● Michael Levine visited the Bog Jan. 14. He 'bumped' into a Northern Harrier at a rather close range, noting the obvious white rump,

● John Skene found 29 species at the Bog on Feb. 9. Geese numbers were high with 1500 Canada and 350 Greater White-fronted. He had a number of ducks including 16 Red-heads, 2 Goldeneye plus a dozen Coots.

● February 16 at the Prophetstown Overlook was a good day in spite of the mist. Returning Red-winged Blackbirds and other species were there to greet the 17 people who showed up.

● The Feb. 23 field trip drew 14 people They got to see a good array of native geese including huge waves of Greater White-fronted Geese passing north overhead. Common & Hooded Merganser



White Fronted Geese in flight

White-phase Snow Goose

Canada Goose & smaller Cackling Goose



## Controversial Kankakee CAFO Proposal Revived

The proposal for a 4,350 cow dairy CAFO reported as withdrawn in the last *Warbler* has since been resubmitted by Texas-based Natural Prairie Dairy. This controversial CAFO would be located on a 2,500-acre farm at 4500 W. County Road 400 North in Newton County, adjacent to the Nature Conservancy's Kankakee Sands restoration.

A number of residents as well as state environmental groups have opposed the plan, saying it could pollute the water in local wells, adversely affect local property values and hamper efforts to draw in more tourists to nearby public lands. It is hard to imagine a worse site for a CAFO, right next to the premier natural restoration in Indiana. The 2,500 acre farm is within the dry bed of what was once Beaver Lake. The soils are porous sand which raises the water pollution concerns. The proposed dairy will annually produce more than 26 million gallons of urine.

Unfortunately IDEM is limited as to what factors it can consider in the permitting process for a CAFO because of legislative restrictions. As a result, IDEM had no grounds to refuse a permit for the dairy's construction and the permit was granted on January 10th of this year. The one thing the public can do now is to urge the three Newton County Commissioners to direct the BZA's attorney to follow the law and hold a public hearing on a BZA petition that was filed.. Members of the BZA are appointed by the commissioners and can weigh in with the BZA's attorney on the proper course of action. Let's speak up and let Newton County's elected commissioners know we want the BZA to follow the law!

### Commissioner contact info:

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Tim Drenth, [tdrenth@newtoncounty.in.gov](mailto:tdrenth@newtoncounty.in.gov)

Mickey Read, [mread@newtoncounty.in.gov](mailto:mread@newtoncounty.in.gov)

## DNR Sandhill Crane Surveys

People often wonder when is the best time to see Sandhill Cranes at Jasper-Pulaski Fish & Wildlife Area. Luckily, during migration the DNR staff do a weekly count which is reported on the DNR website.

Here are the figures for the past fall. Go to the website to see this spring's as they appear.

●Dec. 18:	2,578
●Dec. 12:	7,958
●Dec. 6:	21,880
●Nov. 27:	29,661
●Nov. 20:	23,727
●Nov. 13:	12,722
●Nov. 7:	5,361
●Oct. 30:	5,965
●Oct. 23:	4,591
●Oct. 16:	2,067

## Spring Special at Wild Bird Shoppe

The Wild Bird Shoppe is giving 30% off on heated bird bath products all though the month of March.

To get your Warbler via email , contact [sueandtedulrich@msn.com](mailto:sueandtedulrich@msn.com).

## Local State Park Grows In Size

A new land purchase is increasing Prophetstown State Park by 134 acres. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources announcement was made last Tuesday (March 5). The parcel is being purchased for \$1.1 million from the Trustees of the Opal Hatke Trust. It expands the park to the SE.

The new acquisition solves the problem of finding an alternate route for the power lines that were proposed to run through the *Farm at Prophetstown*, a 1920 farm re-enactment . Powerlines would have been out of sync with the historical ambience of the farm.

The DNR has been interested in buying the Hatke property since the park's founding. The DNR's plans involve creating a lake to provide additional recreational opportunities.

SAS has been regularly hosting Audubon at the Overlook events in the park. It is also the best local site to see prairie species such as Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrow, along with Bell's Vireo, Blue Grosbeaks and Osprey.



Grasshopper Sparrow at Prophetstown Photo by Chuck Tuttle

## Protection Upheld for Artic's Ringed Seal

The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the Endangered Species Act protection for Ringed Seals— Arctic ice seals threatened by climate change. The ruling reverses a 2016 lower-court decision that rejected protection for the seals, which give birth in snow caves built on top of sea ice. As global temperatures rise, it causes the caves to collapse, leaving pups vulnerable to death by freezing or predation.

The Center for Biological Diversity petitioned to protect these seals in 2008. Four years later they were put on the endangered species list — but the oil industry and the state of Alaska challenged that decision leading to the lengthy appeals process.

## Christmas Count Comments

Looking over the results to the right, you can see that this Christmas Count season lacked the waterfowl **found on last year's counts**—7 less than the 21 species of last year, and owl species dropped to 4 from 7.

**Although Lafayette's count was** the first held and had good weather, it was slow in the field: birds were unusually silent. Unique species included all 3 Swans (Mute, Trumpeter and Tundra), Wood Duck, American Black Duck, Lesser Scaup, American Coot and a Chipping Sparrow.



Wood Duck

Cass County followed a week later. They added Turkey Vulture, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Wilson's Snipe, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. **They also had one Harlan's Red-tailed Hawk** included in their 35 total.



Ruby-crowned Kinglet

Last was the Willow Slough-Iroquois Count held Jan.1. It had Bufflehead, Northern Shrike and Snow Bunting which had been missed on the two earlier counts.



Northern Shrike

## Area Christmas Bird Counts 2018

Species Name:	Laf	WS/I	Cass
Greater White-fronted Goose	cw	23	0
Cackling Goose	1	0	0
Canada Goose	3791	100	1102
Mute Swan	10	0	0
Trumpeter Swan	1	0	0
Tundra Swan	2	0	0
Wood Duck	1	0	0
Gadwall	27	0	1
American Black Duck	17	0	0
Mallard	2039	48	180
Northern Shoveler	1	0	0
Ring-necked Duck	24	0	0
Lesser Scaup	12	0	0
Bufflehead	0	1	0
Ring-necked Pheasant	0	56	4
Wild Turkey	0	4	25
Great Blue Heron	16	3	54
Turkey Vulture	0	0	45
Golden Eagle	0	1	1
Northern Harrier	7	13	3
Sharp-shinned hawk	2	0	1
<b>Cooper's Hawk</b>	9	4	5
Bald Eagle	50	2	33
Red-shouldered Hawk	8	1	3
Red-tailed Hawk	43	23	35
Rough-legged Hawk	1	25	3
American Coot	14	0	0
Sandhill Crane	169	0	100
Killdeer	0	2	1
<b>Wilson's Snipe</b>	0	0	3
Ring-billed Gull	841	0	544
Herring Gull	0	1	1
Rock Pigeon	795	65	147
Eurasian Collared Dove	0	8	0
Mourning Dove	224	198	35
Eastern Screech-Owl	4	12	3
Great Horned Owl	1	9	1
Barred Owl	0	6	2
Short-eared Owl	6	2	0
Belted Kingfisher	8	2	10
Red-headed Woodpecker	5	5	9
Red-bellied Woodpecker	98	36	68
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	0	3
Downy Woodpecker	124	24	51
Hairy Woodpecker	24	16	10
Northern Flicker	24	8	28
Pileated Woodpecker	19	1	16
American Kestrel	8	7	17
Northern Shrike	0	2	0
Blue Jay	129	131	104
American Crow	439	323	139
Horned Lark	4	49	10
Carolina Chickadee	134	0	96
Black-capped Chickadee	0	23	0
Tufted titmouse	94	6	53
Red-breasted Nuthatch	11	5	3
White-breasted Nuthatch	131	24	68
Brown Creeper	24	2	17
Winter Wren	1	0	3
Carolina Wren	58	4	25
Golden-crowned Kinglet	3	2	22
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	0	0	3

Species Name:	Laf	WS/I	Cass
Eastern Bluebird	59	33	81
Hermit Thrush	1	0	1
American Robin	655	29	162
Mockingbird	1	0	1
European Starling	3925	1669	2269
Cedar Waxwing	3	13	0
Lapland Longspur	0	17	5
Snow Bunting	0	3	0
Yellow-rumped Warbler	0	0	1
American Tree Sparrow	101	296	69
Chipping Sparrow	1	0	0
Field Sparrow	1	17	1
Fox Sparrow	2	0	1
Dark-eyed Junco	314	301	217
White-crowned Sparrow	101	296	14
White-throated Sparrow	38	26	72
Savannah Sparrow	0	1	0
Song Sparrow	66	24	26
Swamp Sparrow	9	9	5
Eastern Towhee	2	0	2
Northern Cardinal	202	464	135
Red-winged Blackbird	21	406	9
Common Grackle	1	1	0
Brown-headed Cowbird	8	4	0
House Finch	94	22	86
Purple Finch	3	2	2
◆ Pine Siskin	1	42	0
American Goldfinch	85	258	81
House Sparrow	69582	254	344
Total Individuals	15,623	5246	6673
Total Species	72	65	69

In all, 105 species—including the bird seen count week but not count day (cw)—were found on at least one of the three counts..

Participants Tippecanoe County included 18 observers in 11 parties plus 1 feeder watcher: Delano, Kevin & Mark Arvin, David Balser, Mike Brattain, Alan Bruner, Karen Castelli, Barny Dunning, Ed Hopkins (compiler), Amrta Imamoar, Elsa Janle, Amy Krzton-Presson, Rusty McIntyre, John Skene, Larry and Rebecca Theller, Chuck Tuttle, Susan Ulrich and Megan Zagorski.

Willow-Slough Iroquois Preserves had 12 observers in 5 parties.: Ken Brock, John Cas-sady, Christine & Robert Guth, Jed Hertz, Lynea Hinchman, Edward Hopkins (compiler), Jeff McCoy, Randy Pals, Gary & Bronson Ratcliff, & Lynn Vernon.

Cass County: info not supplied but most of the following from last year probably on list: Landon Neumann (compiler), Bud Dodrill, Steve Doud, Becky Heck, John Felton, Eric Ripma, Aidan Rominger, Joe & Less Schidler, Tyler Stewart & Susan Ulrich.

### 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**      \$ \_\_\_\_\_



## First successful invasive species removal in Marquesas

Conservationists leapt from boats onto sheer rock faces and braved "10,000 dive-bombing Sooty Terns" (see above) to accomplish the first successful eradication of invasive rats on Teuaua Island, a part of French Polynesia. This success paves the way for larger island restorations across the Marquesas Archipelago.

Teuaua, a small, uninhabited island in the Marquesas Archipelago of French Polynesia, is home to 90,000 Sooty Terns – one of the nation's largest colonies. These elegant seabirds share the habitat with nationally significant populations of Bulwer's Petrel and other species.

"This island is a critical habitat for breeding and roosting seabirds and offers a glimpse into the once-rich coastal ecosystems that existed across the Marquesas archipelago," explains SOP Manu project manager Tehani Withers – a winner of BirdLife's *Young Conservation Leadership Awards* in 2018, who led the island's restoration work. Non-native rats wreck havoc on island nesting seabirds and other species, eating eggs, chicks, and even munching up the native vegetation.

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## Tidbits

♦ Canada's boreal forest is the largest intact old-growth forest on earth, but over one million acres are cleared each year, much of it turned into toilet paper, paper towels, & tissues.

♦ The earliest native wildflower in this area is the Skunk Cabbage. Its cellular respiration is so high the flower stalk "melts" its way through ice, snow and frozen ground. Even when the air is below freezing, the plant may be 30° warmer.

♦ Octopus blood is based on copper rather than iron which is why their blood is blue, rather than red.

♦ If the human eye were a digital camera it would have 576 megapixels.

♦ Flour from cattail roots is equal in nutritional value to any other flower. The roots are at their peak as a source of starch during winter.

♦ Ninety-five percent of Yellowstone's whitebark pine trees have been negatively impacted by mountain pine beetles.

♦ The Calliope Hummingbird found in the western US is the tiniest breeding bird in the United States—a mere 2.75-3 inches in length and weighing less than a penny.





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## Upcoming Wednesdays In the Wild

- Mar 13 1-3pm\* Young Forests for Sustainable Habitats -(First of today's programs)----- indoor pgm—LNC**  
**Lenny Farlee** (Purdue Hardwood Tree Regeneration & Improvement Ctr) reviews characteristics of young forest habitats and their benefits for wildlife, then discusses management techniques used to conserve the communities that depend on these forests.
- Mar 13 7-9pm\* Invasives in Your County ---2nd of today's programs----- indoor pgm—LNC**  
Join us for this vital discussion on the Top 10 invasive species in Tippecanoe County, led by **Amber Slaughterbeck** (Regional Specialist, Indiana Invasives Initiative). Information about identification of each species, their impacts, eradication techniques and tools, plus how you can get involved in the Indiana Invasives Initiative.
- Mar 20 1-3pm Literary Naturalists and Journaling ---indoor pgm—LNC** After sharing some gems of environmental literature, from both familiar and new authors, **Mary Cutler** (Naturalist, TCPD.) will explore the process of journaling, from phenological and citizen science records to creative expressions **Brenda Moore** (Property Manager, TCPD.) will then lead a journal-making session with tips on how to add artistic elements to your writing.
- Mar 27 1-3pm Novel Ecosystems -----indoor/outdoor pgm—LNC**  
**Stephanie Frischie** (Agronomist/Native Plant Specialist, Xerces Society) expands our thinking of what is "natural" as she shares definitions & examples of novel ecosystems. Weather permitting, a walk will follow on the Celery Bog trails: is it a novel ecosystem?

**Tentative Future Schedule subject to change**

- APR 3 1-3pm Cunningham Woods Forest Management** - Lenny Farlee - outdoor - Cunningham Woods
- Apr 10 1-3pm Warren County Wildflower/Nature Hike** - Susan Ulrich—outdoor at Ulrich's property.
- APR 17 1-3pm Purdue Wildlife Area Research Projects** - Brian Beheler- outdoor pgm - Purdue Wildlife Area.
- APR 24 1-3pm NICHES walk-** Gus Nyberg - outdoor pgm - **NICHES property to be chosen later**
- MAY 1 1-3pm Celery Bog Birding Hike** - Susan Ulrich - indoor/outdoor pgm - LNC
- MAY 8 1-3pm NICHES walk?** - Gus Nyberg - outdoor pgm - **NICHES property?**
- MAY 15 1-3pm Evonic/TNC Gravel Hill Prairie Walk** - Stuart Orr- outdoor pgm - Evonics Wildlife Habitat Area
- MAY 22 1-3pm Chestnut Tree Breeding** - Jim McKenna - outdoor pgm - **Location to be determined**
- MAY 29 1-3pm Turtles** - Rod Williams? - indoor pgm - LNC