



Sycamore Warbler

Volume 45 Issue 2 Summer 2020

Audubon Spring Activities Curtailed: now easing into Summer and Fall

Spring Activities: The calendar in the Spring issue of the Warbler, was essentially moot after March, from the cancellation of SAS's Conservation Bake and Plant Sale, to the closure of Lilly Nature center and SAS's April and May programs, followed by field trips, Earth Day celebrations, **Garden Expo**, the 5th Grade Bird Hikes and **Mind BOGgling Event**.

Global Big Day Bird Count: The major activity that went ahead was **May's Global Big Day Bird Count**. In this case, since coverage was done by individuals working alone or by family groups, it was easy to fit it into the corona virus social distancing parameters. Results are on p. 10. You can read Barny's comments on the new format for the count on page 7. Another activity that went on in a modified fashion was **RIP Squad's** invasive work. A number of individuals who had free time—thanks to schools being closed or work reduction—went out on their own and helped remove garlic mustard at local parks and NICHES properties. Thanks to all of you who used your down time to help make Celery Bog and other public areas better for birds and wildlife. If you didn't coordinate your efforts with Patty Jones, please email her and give her an estimate of your hours for her yearly report. Her email is: removeinvasiveplants.wcinps@gmail.com.



Bird Sightings: People also used some of their extra time to get out in the field and go birding (judging by the number of bird sightings reported for **Nature Notes**). It's not that surprising. Enjoying birds is an activity easy to do on your own or in a small group. A number of people also took a lot more nature pictures which should make for an interesting September program—assuming Lilly Nature Center is open by September 10. The innovative photo to the right is from Dan Miller and shows a Mourning Warbler in his camera viewfinder.

Summer Activities: Yes, SAS does have upcoming activities. The summer calendar is usually a short list as SAS doesn't have programs in summer and reduces the number of field activities since people normally travel a lot. You can see the list on the back page of this newsletter. Missing from the calendar this year is **Riverfest**, an SAS summer staple, as it, like so many other festivals, has been cancelled.

Also **Wednesdays in the Wild** is hosting outdoor-only programs from July 15 to October 28. See p. 6 for July and August's. Each presenter set a participant limit for their outing. This means people wishing to attend a program need to register in advance to be put on the list or if necessary, a waiting list. People attending will need to comply with any virus-related requirements the presenter may have as well as any set by the state or local government.

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The Importance of Parks

During the coronavirus pandemic, access to the outdoors has taken on a whole new importance. Emerging data confirm what many of us have noted in our local communities: since the start of the crisis Americans have turned to parks in record-breaking numbers, seeking relief from anxiety, grief, and isolation. At the same time, officials have had to make difficult decisions to close some parks or change the way they're used, in a bid to slow the virus's spread—meaning more people have grappled with the challenges of *not* having easy access to the outdoors.

But for far too many people in America, it's *never* been easy to get outside. 100 million people in this country don't have a park within a 10-minute walk of home. These inequities have serious, measurable consequences even in the best of times. As health experts urged people to stick closer to home park access was more (see p. 8)

CHAPTER NEWS

Feast Update

As of June 3 the Tippecanoe County Historical Society is planning on holding the Feast of the Hunters Moon on October 3-4. This can change depending on what happens between then and now.

At SAS's June board meeting it was decided to go ahead and apply for our usual booth. We need to check with our leg supplier to see how late we can cancel our order without penalties if it is necessary. More in the next issue.

Program Plans

At this point we hope to hold September's **Bring Your Own Program** on the 10th but who knows. . It usually starts off with a carry-in dinner at 6 p.m. We'd like to do that but circumstances may mean skipping the dinner (& maybe the program) this year. More in the next Warbler. It's possible Lilly Nature Center may not even be open for programs by then. Chuck will be checking with our cancelled Spring program presenters to try and reschedule them for this Fall.

Pop-up Plant Sale

Cancelling the Spring Bake & Plant Sale and Garden Expo resulted in a backlog of plants to sell. SAS & the Indiana Native Plant Society organized an impromptu plant "yard" sale June 20-21 at Temple Pearson's house. In spite of the last minute arrangements (decided to do it on Tuesday, held it that weekend) it was a surprising success. Both groups took home \$430.50.

SAS Event Updates:

With situations changing, it is hard to notify members about those changes: an additional field trip or plant sale, e.g. or an event that has

to be cancelled or time or date changed. Susan Ulrich (see email inside back cover) keeps the email list for people who get the **Warbler** via email. People on the list can also be contacted about changes in SAS activities. To be added, just send her your email. The list will not be shared or used for anything but the newsletter and program updates and changes.

Birding on the Fly

Another email list is maintained by Barny Dunning who notifies birders about unusual bird sighting nearby or around the state. People on the list get an email from Barny about rare species they might want to see. He also uses it for updates to programs and field trips. Contact him if you want to be added to this list. His email is on p. 11.



Hummingbird Trip??

Barny is looking into holding another Hummingbird Banding trip to the Mary Gray Sanctuary in late summer/early fall. It includes free camping Friday night with banding taking place in the morning. If it is a "go" both the birding on the Fly and Warbler emails lists mentioned above will be used to notify members. Let him know if you are interested.



Board Actions

The SAS board is working with Celery Bog to purchase a new kiosk devoted to bird sightings in the park.

The board also signed onto a national letter that was sent to both senate party leaders (McConnell & Shumer), and the two national house party leaders (Pelosi & McCarthy). The first part along with the conclusion of the multi-page letter are included on p.3. Summaries of sections between the two omit the detailed recommendations of actions and footnotes.

Thank You's

Our thanks to Rita Sharma, Liz Solberg and Patty Jischke for their recent donations. Their generosity and support for Audubon is greatly appreciated. So is Temple Pearson's allowing us to use her yard for the plant sale.

"Ask an Expert"

On May 21st Barny Dunning, Purdue professor of wildlife ecology, and Jessica Outcalt, research scientist (both also SAS board members), spent an hour answering questions from the public about making yards more attractive to birds; what bird apps can be used to help identify what you are seeing or hearing; and more.

People with questions could place them in the comment section on the Purdue FNR Facebook page ahead of time or ask their question live in the chat box. Anyone wanting to watch this q & a session could simply go to the Purdue FNR Facebook page.

The trails at the Indiana Audubon Society's Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary near Connersville are the perfect social distancing adventure. Be sure to check out the latest addition to the MGBS trail system on Tulip Poplar Trail. The beautiful Spring weather allowed the MGBS caretakers and volunteers to finish the latest bridge on the property. Put boots to dirt at Mary Gray this summer!

Letter to Congressional Leaders

“The COVID-19 pandemic is a national crisis and the need to address the health and safety of communities as well as the economic futures of people across the nation is paramount. As Congress works to restart the American economy and put people back to work, you have an opportunity to create a large number of green, long-term jobs performing vital conservation and restoration work.

Similar to the establishment of the [Civilian Conservation Corps](#) during the recovery from the Great Depression, Congress can revive the United States economy by investing \$25 billion in new and existing conservation programs that will create hundreds of thousands of direct jobs and provide benefits to people, communities and the environment. On the ground conservation and restoration work has myriad benefits. Most importantly, this work is needed in virtually every corner of the United States, creates quality jobs impossible to outsource, and can provide employment opportunities for low-wealth communities, Black, Brown, Indigenous and other people of color, and younger people, all of whom are suffering disproportionately from this current economic downturn. Conservation work can—and should—be conducted in an equitable manner, guaranteeing fair wages and utilizing project labor agreements, community benefit agreements, local hire, and other provisions and practices that ensure the rights of workers and promote environmental justice.

The United States can overcome this economic hardship while protecting and restoring our unique natural resources which includes a diverse array of fish and wildlife and our national wildlife refuges, forests, parks, monuments and other public lands. Restoring wildlife, wild lands and waterways contributes to significant public health benefits for all people. As Congress begins to plan for the post-pandemic recovery, we urge you to provide funding for federal agencies and existing federal grant programs to support the work of state and local governments and agencies, Tribes, public universities, and small businesses to immediately implement the following conservation and restoration projects for the benefit of all.”

Below are summaries of sections of the letter.

RESTORING WILDLIFE ON PUBLIC LANDS **Prioritizing Endangered Species Recovery** Threatened and endangered fish, wildlife and plants are found across the United States, and every imperiled species would benefit from additional conservation work to further their recovery. Despite their importance, recovery programs have been consistently and significantly underfunded, with recent estimates indicating species receive less than 1/4 funding needed. This could thousands of people to work on environmentally beneficial projects in a COVID-19 stimulus bill. .

RESTORING PUBLIC LANDS. Public lands – including national forests, parks, and wildlife refuges – are crucial to the conservation of our nation’s fish and wildlife and the well-being of its people. Unfortunately, landscapes and habitats on public lands nationwide have suffered significant harm and are in need of environmental and cultural resource restoration. Similarly, much of the infrastructure associated with the use of public lands has been abandoned, left in disrepair, is no longer needed, and/or creates hazards for public land users and wildlife.

FULLY FUND AND EXPAND THE U.S. YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS. Restoring Watersheds and Coastal Areas Watershed and coastal restoration projects have immediate positive impacts for local communities, wildlife and water quality including long-term benefits for advancing that could be immediately implemented with additional funding. Project funding should be prioritized to improve water quality,

fish habitat, connectivity and stream flows; serve disadvantaged and front-line Environmental Justice communities; and recover endangered species.

GEOGRAPHICAL SHIFTS for wildlife populations and plant communities. Benefits accrue from facilitating the safe and unimpeded movement of fish and wildlife — from reducing collisions between vehicles and wildlife, to restoring functional wildlife corridors. The activities listed would create smart infrastructure with significant economic returns, support state efforts to mitigate the harmful effects of roads, provide jobs, create more climate resilient landscapes that protect people and wildlife. To do: Identify wildlife corridors; construct wildlife underpasses and bounding fences; remove or re-site infrastructure that is a barrier to fish and wildlife, bury transmission lines, develop and employ technology in order to reduce impacts from energy production and other infrastructure,

CONTROLLING INVASIVE SPECIES. Invasive species undermine critical infrastructure, placing entire communities at risk, overwhelming some of the most treasured and biologically significant landscapes in the United States, and leading to degraded habitat for fish and wildlife. For example, over two million acres in the National Refuge System are infested with invasive plants and more than 1,700 invasive animal populations are found on refuge lands, yet current funding and capacity only allows treatment of a small fraction of the impacted acres. Addressing the proliferation of invasive species, restoring degraded landscapes, and protecting vital infrastructure is urgently needed, and will provide many new jobs while generating substantial returns on investment.

PROMOTING WILDLIFE COEXISTENCE. Wildlife and humans are increasingly coming into contact due to expansion of the development footprint into wildlife habitat. The need to increase coexistence efforts where wildlife conflicts are already occurring or are likely to occur is clear. Additionally, efforts to safeguard wildlife from negative impacts associated with human development by implementing non-lethal programs and projects is needed, specially for communities trying to coexistence with native wildlife.

CONCLUSION: “Bold investments to stimulate the economy through the restoration of public lands, waters, fish and wildlife habitat not only have the potential to put hundreds of thousands of people to work, but also to ensure more resilient ecosystems and communities throughout the United States that will result in enduring public health benefits and quality of life improvements. Accordingly, funding should be directed at programs that focus on restoration rather than resource extraction, promote coordination and cooperation with local communities, and embody the principles of environmental justice. Recovery funding should fully comply with all laws designed to safeguard the environment, workers and the public. Scientists warn that relaxing environmental standards will only lead to future pandemics. For that reason, we urge you to strengthen our bedrock environmental laws including the passage of legislation to restore critical protections under the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act. We must also ensure that our programs and policies are designed to protect against future pandemics. Decades of scientific studies have warned that—in addition to live wildlife markets—habitat destruction and biodiversity loss also create significant risk of zoonotic disease spillover into the human population. The projects and programs we have outlined above, which focus on changing our relationship with the natural world by restoring lost and degraded fish and wildlife habitat, promoting coexistence, and increasing biodiversity, are key steps toward protecting against future pandemics.

Thank you for your attention to these important issues and proposals. We look forward to working with you on a stimulus package that provides relief and recovery from the crisis triggered by COVID-19, and safeguards the health and resilience of people, public lands and wildlife for generations to come.”

Nature Notes & News

- Jim McGlone had several thousand White-fronted Geese at his wetland in Warren County in late February/early March. By March 13 the number was down to 100 birds.
- The Beheler Family who live near Jim's property were surprised to see 2 endangered Whooping Cranes land briefly on their lawn in March before the birds took off as the family tried to get a better look.
- More migrants started appearing the last week in April. Chuck Tuttle & others saw male Summer Tanager and Baltimore Oriole, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and the first male Ruby-throated hummingbirds.
- Susan Ulrich had winter wrens regularly along her streams from April 2 to 11. On the 21st, a Yellow-throated Warbler came to their suet mix, stopping for a bite thru May 10.
- April 21, John Skene had both the Audubon's and Myrtle subspecies of Yellow-rumped Warbler at Celery Bog.
- By April 28 migrants were rushing back. Barny Dunning had his first Least Flycatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, Northern Waterthrush and Ovenbird of spring at Celery Bog. Other people saw the same and more. Jessica Outcalt had a Blue-winged Warbler and a nice view of a male Kentucky Warbler a species rarely seen at Celery Bog. .
- A shorebird spot in the southern part of the county can be found along Route 28 west of Romney. just west of the intersection with County Road 400 West and north of the state route. The most interesting waders were a pair of Long-billed Dowitchers who were there several days. Barny saw one on the 28th about 9:30 am. Also reported were Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Semipalmated Plover plus other species. Barny counted 38 individuals on his visit, most were yellowlegs.
- A couple of SAS members did the early bird walk at the Bog on April 30 in spite of a sharp wind and cold temperatures. Bad weather made for good birding. The best bird

was a SNOWY EGRET across from the bench that looks out over the northern basin to the back end of Walmart (this bench area is being called "the point"). It was huddled against the wind along the E edge of the bog but walked around enough to show off his yellow feet (Chuck Tuttle got a photo). Also seen were Kentucky Warbler, a pair of Prothonotary Warblers, Barny's first Gray Catbirds and Eastern Kingbirds, an Orange-crowned Warbler, male Summer Tanager, lots of stuff.

- Nick Harby was at Celery Bog on June 1 and saw 13 Cormorants flying over head from the general area of Walmart. They came across singly and in small groups over a period of about 3 minutes.



- A male Hooded Warbler showed up for several days in the strip of woods between Lilly Nature Center and the wetlands. On the morning of May 2, it was found around 9:30 a.m. singing - sometimes a typical Hooded song but sometimes an alternate song .
- The Hooded Warbler, Kentucky Warbler (2 seen on the 2nd) and Prairie Warbler in the last couple days is a good mix of species that are not usually found regularly at Celery Bog. But Barny Dunning felt that overall migrant numbers seemed lower than they had been and singing was subdued.
- Karen Griggs wrote on May 2 "Hummingbird is here! In person", Larry and Becky Theller had their first hummer May 3.
- On May 3 at Celery Bog Truman Best reported that a unexpected lone Northern Pintail flew into the north part of the main pond.

- Patty Jischke wrote that she had a male Orchard Oriole in, what else—her orchard—singing and working over a plum tree on May 4.
- May 9 Mark Arvin discovered a Clay-colored Sparrow at the Overlook in Prophetstown SP. The bird was in the woods between the parking lot and the observation deck. Later it was on the path to the observation deck. A small flock of White-crowned Sparrows was nearby.
- Becky Theller followed up on the sparrow and managed to see it on the grassy hillside beyond the pond
- A laughing Gull was reported by Fritz Davis on Sunday, May 10th.
- On the 11th, Larry & Becky Theller were on the cold observation deck at Prophetstown around 9 am when another birder happened by (Drew Sweet). They introduced themselves. While we chatted, a pair of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers showed up and milled around seemingly agitated. Then they landed over their heads and they realized their nest was built right over the deck. A great photo op that would have been missed if not for the brief and yet socially distanced conversation.
- Also on the 11th Ed Hopkins wrote that the two Ruddy Turnstone at Bicentennial Park, first seen yesterday, were relocated that morning. First person to report them through eBird was Tabitha Olsen. It prompted Barny Dunning to interrupt final grading to check them out. He and Mark Arvin saw them on the far north edge of the lake east of the larger island. Ruddy Turnstones are attracted to rocky edges. A scope was definitely necessary.
- Mark Arvin reported that there is a Prairie Warbler singing across the road (the open brushy field to the west) from Granville Sand Barrens. It has bred successfully there in the past. He walked his parents property in the morning and scored on 21 warbler species including a gorgeous Hooded Warbler (finally)!
- On May 13th there was an "Audubon at the Overlook" event at Prophetstown from 7-9 pm, hoping to catch some migration action late in the day. The State Park was actually open for business although the campground was still closed.

Mark Arvin was the only person to join Chuck Tuttle and Barny Dunning which allowed for lots of distancing. Not many migrants but the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher's nest was admired, and Baltimore and Orchard Orioles, Nashville Warbler, Eastern Kingbird and a beaver in the pond showed up. Mark had a Semipalmated Plover and a pair of Great Horned Owl fledglings before the event. One interesting moment was using the **Seek** phone app to identify Dwarf Larkspurs - it is a nice little free app. Along the road were singing Grasshopper Sparrows, Henslow's Sparrow and a Sedge Wren.

- May 14th there was a lot of bird activity at Celery Bog in the morning before the rains. A small group came for the Early Bird Hike and covered the area from the gravel parking lot south to the Lindberg road bridge, The bird list included Mourning, Canada, Blackpoll, Black-&-White, & Blackburnian Warblers, Eastern Wood Pewee (a fairly common breeder but just arrived back), and Blue-headed Vireo among others. Before the group gathered, Mark Arvin had a Forster's Tern near the bridge and a Least Bittern in the corner of cattails by the east end of the Lindberg bridge. Probably lots more present since the group didn't bird the entire range along the Bog.

- Birding continued to be great again the next day. Truman Best had 20 warbler species which he thinks may be his highest single day warbler species count.

- Lisa and Ed Schools showed up at the Bog on the 15th too, birding it between 3-4:30 in the afternoon. They encountered 16 species of warbler (Blackpoll, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Canada, Chestnut-sided, Bay-breasted, Redstart, Palm, Blue-winged, Yellow, Wilson's, Golden-winged, Nashville Connecticut, Mourning & Ovenbird)..

- Several people observed Great-Blue Heron's at the Bog that seemed to think they were Ospreys. They flew very low over the water and then dropped into the water, sticking their heads in to catch prey. Barny Dunning saw the birds doing this with success at least twice, but had never seen the behavior before. He checked *The Birds of North Ameri-*

ca which had the following on heron foraging behavior: "Individuals hunt most often by slowly wading or standing in wait of prey in shallow water ...Also dive feet first after prey ...and hunt while floating ... or from floating objects . Kubisz (1989) reported a heron landing on water to pick up a food item and then taking off from his floating position."

- Speaking of Great Blue Herons, Gail & Ron Turco made visits to the Great Blue Heron nesting colony by Harrison High School. On May 22nd they were able to see juveniles and counted at least 8, but were sure more were there but not visible. The colony was very active with about 18 adults birds flying in and out. They were also entertained by 2 Eastern Meadowlarks in the grassy field by the elementary school.

- Andrei Gabrielov found a very late Common Loon at Celery Bog on May 22nd opposite the southern deck. Loons are now migrants in Indiana, but historically nested in the far NE corner of the state .

- John Skene visited Martell Forest on May 25th after the main spring migration was over. He found an impressive 54 species including a late Black-throated Green Warbler and 13 American Redstarts.

- On June 3 Nick Harby headed out to Prophetstown State Park on his bicycle. He rode the paved trail that leads to the Tippecanoe River where there is a bench with a view of a bend of the river. Here about 6:30 pm he noticed Cedar Waxwings perched on the branches of a big sycamore. As cedar waxwings do, each one would leave the perch, fly out over the water to grab an insect, then return to the tree. He estimates there were about a couple of dozen birds in all.



Birds Benefit Coral Reefs

Coral reef survival near islands with thriving seabird colonies seem to recover from coral-bleaching events better than those without nearby colonies. A study published in *Global Change Biology* studied twelve West Indian Ocean atolls after an extreme warming event triggered mass bleaching of corals.

The researchers looked at six islands with thriving seabird colonies thanks to the lack of rats and six with depauperate colonies on islands with rats. The former had over 1,200 birds per hectare, the latter only 2. Only the reefs near the seabird-rich islands experienced revival including dramatic upswings in the populations of crustose coralline algae (essential for healthy reef systems).

It was the abundance of bird poop that made the difference. The extra nutrients did not enhance the resistance to bleaching, but promoted recovery in the subsequent years. Both plant-consuming fish and fish which consumed fish also seemed to do better near these islands.

Seabird colonies on islands can rebound within a decade or two following the elimination of rats. One of the suggestions of the study is to restore seabird populations by removing rats and other introduced pests on the world's islands in order to benefit a significant portion of the world's coastal reefs.

Human Imprint on Environment Not New

The *ArchaeoGLOBE Project*, a worldwide collaboration by over 250 archeologists, mapped the human environmental footprint going back 10,000 years. It looked at 10 periods from 10,000 years BP (before Present) to 1850 a.d. The result was a map of land use in 146 regions across six continents (all but antarctica).

The archeologists ranked the relative percentage of foraging, agriculture and pastoralism within their regions of expertise. They concluded that humans had substantially altered Earth's landscape by 3,000 BP, when agriculture became widespread.

WEDNESDAYS in the WILD JULY— AUGUST 2020

REGISTRATION is required by noon on Monday prior to the program:

765-567-2993 or mcutler@tippecanoe.in.gov Natural History Talks/Workshops/Field Trips:

All are held from 1-3 p.m. except for August 5 which is 7-9 p.m.

All programs are outdoors. Facial coverings and/or physical distancing are highly recommended.

Jul 8. 1-3pm Prophetstown: A Place Worth Fighting For -----No gate fee, but \$2 program fee/person payable at the gate. Join Jenna Parks Freeman (Interpretive Naturalist at Prophetstown State Park) as we uncover the history of Indiana's newest state park. Chosen by Native Americans for thousands of years, Prophetstown provided essentials for life and culture. In this guided tour we'll take a look into the Prophetstown movement & learn about the importance of this unique place by exploring the Native American village. Limited to 25 participants. Meet at the flagpole by the visitors' center.

Jul 15. 1-3 pm Dragonfly ID Hike----BINOCULARS helpful---At Celery Bog Nature Park. Join Loyce Fandrei (retired biology teacher and dragonfly aficionado) on a walk along the Celery Bog Marsh to look for dragonflies and learn their names. Loyce has been working to expand the records of dragonfly species occurring in various Indiana counties. Maybe we can help her find a new one for Tippecanoe. Meet at the Amphitheater for a brief introduction to dragonflies before the walk. Limited to 25 participants. NOTE: Copies of Loyce's dragonfly guides will be available for \$10.

Jul 22. 1-3pm Hidden Streams----Small rivers and streams are often overlooked as important ecosystems for fish, mussels, and other aquatic life. Purdue PhD student Suse LaGory will share information about the diversity, ecology and natural history of different stream organisms and the importance of protecting small waterways. Demonstrations of electrofishing and searches for mussels will provide opportunities to see the hidden biodiversity of Burnett's Creek. Meet at Wah-ba-shik-a Nature Center in the Tippecanoe Battlefield Park. Limited to 25 participants.

July 29. 1-3 pm The Past & Present of Happy Hollow Park-----During a leisurely nature walk along Happy Hollow Park's paved trail, participants will learn about the park's history from Kathy Atwell (Retired TCHA Director), see erosion control practices with Dan Dunten (Lilly Nature Center Director), and hear about invasive plant removal efforts from Patty Jones (RIP Squad Coordinator). Limited to 25 participants. Meet at shelter #4 in Happy Hollow Park.

Aug 5 7-9 pm Remnant Prairie-Revelations at Spinn Prairie--CARAVAN leaves Wabashika Nature Center in Battle Ground at 6:30 pm. Join Stephanie Frischie (Plant Ecologist with The Xerces Society) on a botanical exploration of Spinn Prairie, a state dedicated nature preserve and one of the few unplowed prairie remnants in the state of Indiana! **NOTE: NO ESTABLISHED TRAILS, so wear long pants and sturdy footwear!** Limited to 15 participants. Go north on SR 43 (later SR 421). Two miles north of Reynolds, turn E on 200 N; go 1/4 mile; turn right at "T" intersection & go 1/4 mile to the TNC sign on the right side of the road OR join 6:30pm CARAVAN from WNC (off N. 9th St. in Battle Ground).

Aug 12 1-3 pm Exploring Native Plantings at the Master Gardener Extension Gardens ----Tippecanoe County Master Gardner Mickey Penrod shares the development of the prairie plantings at the Extension Gardens (3150 Sagamore Pkwy S, Lafayette) from 2009 to the present. Originally started with tall grass species, it now includes other native prairie plants that attract pollinators. Come and get ideas for how to add natives to your own landscapes! Limited to 25 participants.

Aug 19 1-3 pm The Battle and Beyond—The Battle of Tippecanoe played a pivotal role in Indiana history, but that is not the end of the story! Join Rick Conwell (Tip. Battlefield Museum Store Manager) and Mary Cutler (Naturalist, Tip. Co. Park & Rec. Dept.) as they share the history of this iconic site from 1811 onwards: Political rallies, church camps and Purdue University all have a connection to this unique place! Limited to 25 participants. Meet at the picnic pad at Tippecanoe Battlefield Park in Battle Ground.

Aug 26 1-3 pm "The Prairie Threshold" Walk—where bison roamed, Indians hunted, and fire caused two ecologies to collide! Jim Beaty (Superintendent, Purdue's Agronomy Center for Research & Education) leads this walk through a 4.2-acre restored prairie. Enjoy late wildflowers blooming just above the growing prairie grasses, and learn how the geography of our area where woodlands and prairie meet has given rise to the multiple soil types and climates which result in such a great diversity of native Indiana plants. Limited to 25 participants. Meet at the Purdue Agronomy Center for Research & Education in West Lafayette at 4530 US 52

⇒ Remember you need to REGISTER for programs ←

Most people know heavy birds like the Ostrich and Cassowary, can't fly. But what IS the heaviest bird that CAN fly?

It's the **Great Bustard** (*Otis flava*) a threatened grassland/steppes species found in scattered locales in Europe and Asia. Males can weigh up to 44 lb. Female are much lighter. Earlier this year, major landmarks decided upon at the *Convention on Migratory Species* gave greater protection for this bustard—both on land and in the air. The species has been known to migrate 2,000 miles.



SAS's First Global May Count Barney Dunning, Tippecanoe Co-coordinator

The good news of the "new version" of the Big Day is that we got more participants! I ended up with 24 participants, which is much more than a typical Big Year of the past. See the list on page 10. (Susan Ulrich in Warren Co. also had more participants this year). The other nice thing was that we got info from places that aren't usually covered: Clegg Gardens, Davis Ferry Park, Hadley Lake, for instance. Bad news was that I saw almost no coverage of the southern part of the county, with only Granville Barrens covered south of the river.

We had a total of 138 species, which is pretty good considering the almost total absence of lingering waterfowl and shorebirds. Some "big misses" were Red-shouldered Hawk, Blackpoll Warbler, Cedar Waxwing, Horned Lark, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Common Nighthawk, and Rock Pigeon (!!). The Franklin's Gull and Common Tern at Celery Bog were a day late.

The best birds were probably the Clay-colored Sparrow at Prophetstown and John Skene's Golden Eagle near Ross Hill Park. In both those cases, I had to add the species to my cumulative list, which suggests we haven't had either one on the Big Day in over 10 years.

One caution on the numbers - there was no effort this year to have people "only" survey different areas, so multiple reports were posted on eBird from the same locations. The most checklists were posted from Celery

Bog - I think there were 9. That means that some species were undoubtedly counted by multiple people, which inflates the numbers.

The attached table has 311 Tree Swallows but that number is greatly inflated by the 166 reported from Celery Bog - the species was reported by all 9 people birding there with the maximum report of 50 on any one checklist. So the true number of Tree Swallows at C. Bog was probably much closer to 50 than 166. But I didn't want to just go with the "highest number reported at a given site", because that would seem to violate the spirit of the Global Big Day - that all efforts are important.

I did "edit" a few numbers. I went with the highest number of Double-crested Cormorants at Celery Bog because not doing so would have resulted in a total of hundreds in Tippecanoe County, which just wasn't true. Similarly, all 9 Celery Bog checklists reported the same two Great Egrets, so I included just 2, not 18. I didn't do the same for Palm Warblers because, well, there really were a LOT of Palm Warblers this spring.



Bird Nest Mimics Wasp Nest ?

Red-eyed Vireos use bits of white-faced hornet nest paper in their nests. Bernd Heinrich, Biology professor emeritus at the U of Vermont believes seeking this material must be of benefit and suspects that the shape of the nest (a half circle of material attached to and hanging below a branch) may resemble the bottom of a paper hornet's nest and may help deter predators.

White-faced Hornets are known for their aggressive nest defense and painful stings. It is even more possible that the scent of the paper is a greater deterrent than the look of the nest to red squirrels which are the primary predators of birds nests where Heinrich lives.

As the Climate Warms...

Traps monitored in Marion County show that the number of mosquitoes in Indiana has grown by 500% between 1981 and 2016.

Flex those Mussels

National Parks Magazine
Winter 2020.

Fresh-water mussels are being used to help clean the Anacostia River in Anacostia Park National Park in Washington, D.C. Like oysters who live in salt water, mussels filter excess pollution that comes off the land—from farm fields, sewage treatment plants, or storm runoff. High concentrations of heavy metals, chemicals and sediment can kill mussels, but in less degraded sites mussels can clean the water by absorbing the excess nitrogen and phosphorous as well as settle sediment.

Thanks to decades of work, the quality of the Anacostia River has improved (it got its very first passing grade—a "D"—not long after a \$2.6 billion stormwater tunnel project finished two years ago).

As an experiment in 2018, 3 species of mussels were placed in baskets in the water along the river. After a year the mortality in the baskets was only 8%. That fall the mussels were released into the river to do their thing. The Anacostia Watershed Society will add 35,000 more mussels in the next two years thanks to a grant. "The opportunities for water quality, biodiversity and propagating more mussels are huge here." said Jorge Montero, a natural resource specialist at the Anacostia Watershed Society.

Bird Murals Going International

A number of issues back SAS included a story about the larger than life bird mural paintings in Harlem, NY in honor of John James Audubon who once lived in Harlem. The murals include paintings of more than one hundred bird species that are threatened by climate change. The one pictured here features five species of Warblers (see how many of the five you can identify, they're not all local). The project began in 2014 and is now crossing the ocean to Europe where it will help reconnect city dwellers there with nature.



Parks, continued from p.1

needed than ever. When park facilities including parking lots are closed, only people living within walking distance of a park get to enjoy the outdoors. Others are out of luck.

That means a third of Americans—including 28 million kids—had no place to get out and move around or just sit still and take a few deep breaths. And, with the upcoming heat of summer, residents in neighborhoods without shady green parks will have a higher risk of heat illness. Go to [tpl.org/park score](http://tpl.org/park_score) to see park rankings by area published by **The Trust for Public Land**. They believe everyone, on every block, in every city deserves a great park within a 10-minute walk of home. Check it out for scores of areas in Indiana.

Birdwatching for Beginners Part 2B. By Karen Griggs

Make notes.

When you see a hummingbird in Spring or see the last hummingbird in October, make a brief note in your journal or on your calendar. Then, you can look back at your notes and compare them with other birdwatchers in the area. If you keep a 2" x 3" notebook in the glovebox of your car, you can jot down special events such as an eagle in the median of the highway or in a soybean field. I was surprised that Bald Eagles would eat carrion in addition to fish.

Consider the season.

In winter, Bald Eagles often perch along the Wabash River north of the Salem-Union Street bridge. Eagles are also active all winter along the upper Wabash River between Logansport and Huntington. Most are migrants from further north swelling local numbers. Professor Barney Dunning said that local eagles are on their nests by February or March.

Plan trips based on the season. Mary Cutler, Tippecanoe County naturalist, arranged a woodcock listening expedition at the county amphitheater. I heard some of them "whirring" just at dusk on a warm night in March.

A large flock of sandhill cranes cluster together and rest in November at the Jasper-Pulaski Fish & Game area north of West Lafayette along Highway 421. Over 30,000 of the large birds mass there before migrating to Florida and Georgia. Their numbers build up there again in the spring as they move north to nest.

When you go to Prophetstown State Park to watch birds at the overlook, the guide can tell you what to expect. Walking in the prairie, in early summer, we saw a Dickcissel. Dr. Dunning said that it was marvelous because the bird was a survivor of a Venezuelan Dickcissel extermination campaign some years ago.

Local Help & Supplies.

Until this summer you could watch many birds at the window at the Wild Bird Shoppe on Kalberer Road. The viewing window showed visitors all of the things birds need, from shelter to water and feed. Dozens of songbirds and woodpeckers came in. Employees were helpful and told me how to set my feeders far enough away from trees that a strong squirrel couldn't leap to it and dump out the seed. I found a chipmunk inside the feeder one day!

I also found suet at the Rural King Store on Teal Road that came without the plastic tray. To attract woodpeckers, get a bungee cord and strap suet in a metal cage to the trunk of a tree like Professor emeritus Harmon Weeks does. Suet is very attractive to all our woodpecker species, especially suet with peanut butter added.

Share your excitement

If you attend the Sycamore Audubon Society program meetings, the chair will ask for reports from the field. You can tell the public about your recent sightings and share your joy in nature. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of September to December and February to May at the Lilly Nature Center, Celery Bog Park, Lindberg Road, at 7:15 p.m.

CONSERVATION NEWS

Tell your Rep to Support H.R. 5552

Tell your U.S. representative to support H.R. 5552, the **Migratory Bird Protection Act**. The bill, which has bipartisan support, aims to stop the administration's lax enforcement of one of the U.S.'s most successful bird protection laws: the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Under the act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service cracked down on companies that let birds suffocate in oil field waste pits, get electrocuted on power transmission lines, and drown under commercial fishing nets.

That's why BP paid \$100 million in penalties when its 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill killed hundreds of thousands of birds in the Gulf of Mexico. But the Trump administration is looking the other way -- and countless numbers of birds are paying the price. If the BP oil spill happened today, the company would get off scot free. After all, the administration says, BP didn't intend to kill all of those birds!

Audubon filed suit in May 2018 challenging that opinion. Eight states filed a similar suit in September 2018. In July 2019, the district court gave a greenlight for the lawsuit to advance. The lawsuit is ongoing, but could get a ruling as soon as this summer.

"We're fighting this in court and literally hundreds of thousands of Americans have voiced their opposition through this rushed process," said Yarnold, NAS president. "It's time for Congress to answer their call and move to reinforce these critical protections by passing the Migratory Bird Protection Act."

The good news is that the House Natural Resources Committee passed H.R.5552 on Jan. 15, by a 20-14 margin. The next step is a vote in the full U.S. House.

Ashes to Ashes, Duff to Duff

A Bay Area startup, **Better Place Forests**, is conserving land by purchasing designated "memorial forests" for the dearly departed. Cremated ashes are spread in forested properties, where the nutrients in the ashes feed a tree's root system, and returns the remains of the deceased to the "aliveness" of the ecological world.

European Strategy Released

The European Commission released its highly anticipated **Biodiversity Strategy & Farm to Fork Strategy** on May 20th. These documents map the main features of the EU's biodiversity and food-related policies for the coming decade and are key components of the European Green Deal. These strategies will also be a central element of the EU's Corona crisis recovery plan.

Environmental Standards Nixed

During the pandemic, the Environmental Protection Agency suspended enforcement of environmental standards. So factories, power plants, and other major polluters have a green light to pump dangerous chemicals into the air and water.

Trump is doing this because he thinks environmentalists aren't watching. Together, people need to apply pressure and demand that the EPA reverse these far-reaching dangerous deregulations immediately.

The EPA was created under a law signed by Richard Nixon and is supposed to be non-partisan. But over the past generation it has changed. Now whether our air and water make people sick is a partisan wedge issue. A lack of environmental enforcement allows dirty and polluting industries to endanger communities and citizens today, leading to long-term consequences for tomorrow that all the youth around the world will have to live with.

Dakota Access Pipeline On Hold

Good news: a Federal judge struck down the permits for the Dakota Access Pipeline saying the Corps had failed to answer major queries about possible oil spills, and needs to go back and conduct a true environmental impact statement.

The pipeline was designed to pump oil from the Bakken oil sands in North Dakota, under the Missouri River, and another 1,000 miles to Illinois. A spill (& they always happen) could displace or harm some endangered species. A bad leak could poison parts of the Missouri River and Lake Oahe in the Dakotas the clean water source for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

Scrapped by the Obama administration in 2016 the project was hastily approved by the Army Corps of Engineers under Trump.

Court Sides With Science

A federal court struck down a 2017 EPA policy of ex-administrator Scott Pruitt, to ban large numbers of scientists from sitting on the agency's advisory boards. Scientists who had received EPA grants were banned from serving, but the same rule did not apply to those who had received money from industries.

Pruitt's ban was an attempt to replace some of top experts with industry insiders, thereby weakening the role of science in protecting the public.

Chlorpyrifos Victory

After a 20-year fight led by the Natural Resources Defense Council, Corteva (once part of Dow Chemical) will stop producing chlorpyrifos, a neurotoxic pesticide. It is known to harm the developing brains and nervous systems of children and those who are heavily exposed to it, such as farmworkers.

2020 Global May Bird Count May 9

Species Name:	War	Tip Co						
Canada Goose	120	163	Great-crested Flycatcher	9	14	Northern Waterthrush	3	35
Wood Duck	16	69	Eastern Kingbird	17	27	Louisiana Waterthrush	4	5
Mallard	8	99	White-eyed Vireo	1	12	Kentucky Warbler	5	7
Blue-winged Teal	2	10	Bell's Vireo	0	1	Common Yellowthroat	53	12
Bufflehead	2	0	Yellow-throated Vireo	4	8	Yellow-breasted Chat	5	3
Red-breasted Merganser	1	0	Blue-headed Vireo	1	9	Summer Tanager	0	9
Northern Bobwhite	4	2	Warbling Vireo	17	40	Scarlet Tanager	3	3
Ring-necked Pheasant	10	13	Red-eyed Vireo	4	9	Eastern Towhee	11	25
Wild Turkey	18	4	Blue Jay	69	110	Tree Sparrow	3	0
Pied-billed Grebe	1	5	American Crow	72	51	Chipping Sparrow	35	32
Double-crested Cormorant	1	51	Horned Lark	8	0	Field Sparrow	27	104
Great Blue Heron	12	76	Purple Martin	0	1	Vesper Sparrow	1	1
Great Egret	1	2	Tree Swallow	23	311	Savannah Sparrow	6	4
Green Heron	2	2	No Rough-winged Swallow	26	82	Grasshopper Sparrow	0	1
Turkey Vulture	71	63	Bank Swallow	0	10	Henslow's Sparrow	1	4
Osprey	1	0	Cliff Swallow	19	13	Song Sparrow	20	110
Cooper's Hawk	1	4	Barn Swallow	19	122	Lincoln Sparrow	4	17
Bald Eagle	6	5	Carolina Chickadee	19	67	Swamp Sparrow	11	31
Broad-winged Hawk	1	0	Tufted Titmouse	30	49	White-throated Sparrow	19	123
Red-shouldered Hawk	6	0	White-breasted Nuthatch	16	50	White-crowned Sparrow	13	39
Red-tailed Hawk	10	15	Carolina Wren	11	36	Northern Cardinal	46	172
Rough-legged Hawk	1	0	House Wren	29	129	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	30	53
Golden Eagle	0	1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3	29	Indigo Bunting	42	83
American Kestrel	2	1	Blue-grey Gnatcatcher	32	104	Dickcissel	7	19
Sora	0	1	Eastern Bluebird	20	42	Bobolink	2	7
American Coot	3	2	Veery	0	7	Red-winged Blackbird	242	272
Sandhill Crane	0	1	Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	8	Brown-headed Cowbird	50	118
Killdeer	27	14	Swainson's Thrush	12	19	Eastern Meadowlark	28	38
Solitary	0	12	Hermit Thrush	0	1	Common Grackle	104	38
Spotted Sandpiper	4	13	Wood Thrush	10	21	Brown-headed Cowbird	50	118
Greater Yellowlegs	4	5	American Robin	156	305	Orchard Oriole	12	15
Lesser Yellowlegs	6	8	Gray Catbird	39	165	Baltimore Oriole	45	100
Pectoral Sandpiper	0	1	Northern Mockingbird	2	3	House Finch	9	10
Dunlin	4	0	Brown Thrasher	15	15	American Goldfinch	35	153
Snipe	0	1	European Starling	163	100	House Sparrow	62	28
American Woodcock	3	0	Blue-winged Warbler	4	8			
Black Tern	2	0	Tennessee Warbler	1	1	Total Individuals	2443	5413
Rock Pigeon	9	0	Nashville Warbler	5	29	Total Species	131	138
Eurasian Collared Dove	4	0	Northern Parula	8	19			
Mourning Dove	77	27	Yellow Warbler	18	68			
Great Horned Owl	3	4	Chestnut-sided Warbler	2	1			
Barred Owl	2	1	Magnolia Warbler	0	7			
Chimney Swift	4	39	Cape May Warbler	1	2			
Ruby-throat Hummingbird	12	9	Black-throated Blue	0	4			
Belted Kingfisher	2	6	Yellow-rumped Warbler	18	202			
Red-headed Woodpecker	27	25	Prairie Warbler	1	0			
Red-bellied Woodpecker	27	66	Black-thrted Green Warbler	3	13			
Downy Woodpecker	37	39	Blackburnian Warbler	1	2			
Hairy Woodpecker	3	9	Yellow-throated Warbler	1	6			
Northern Flicker	4	19	Pine Warbler	1	0			
Pileated woodpecker	6	16	Palm Warbler	23	265			
Eastern Wood-Pewee	1	0	Bay-breasted Warbler	0	1			
Acadian Flycatcher	1	1	Cerulean Warbler	3	0			
Willow Flycatcher	1	2	Black & White Warbler	1	13			
Least Flycatcher	1	20	American Redstart	5	14			
Eastern Phoebe	26	33	Prothonotary Warbler	1	1			
			Ovenbird	1	18			

Tippecanoe Participants: Mark Arvin, Trumon Best and Sarah Coapstick Best, Anna Chinn, Barny Dunning (compiler), Peter Dy-liacco, John Furry, Sam Hartzler, Lisa Judge, Temple Pearson, Fritz Smith, Emily Spreen, Drew Sweet, Becky Theller, Larry Theller, Isaac Traynor, Gale Turco, Chuck Tuttle, Sam Warren, Della Willann, Randy Wilson, Theresa Wilson, Karl Wood.

Warren Participants: Brian, Amanda, Phoebe, Callum & Liam Behaler, Robin Benson, Joanna Billiard, Shelly Foran, Kelly Pearson, Kent Walters, Sean Sharma, Sage, Ravi & Roen Walters-Shrma, Ellen Tobias, Ted & Susan Ulrich (compiler),

Some May Count Highlights:



Left to right:
Red-breasted Merganser; Eurasian Collared Dove; Common Snipe; Golden Eagle (Imm).





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Summer Sycamore Audubon Calendar 2020

- July 8 & following Wednesdays **Wednesdays in the Wild.** See the schedule for July and August inside on p. 6. You need to register for the programs you would like to attend.
- July 18 Saturday **Audubon at the Overlook. 7-9 p.m.** Meet at the Overlook below the parking lot at the end of the road in Prophetstown State Park for an evening birding experience and interact with any visitors who happen by.
- August 22 Saturday **Audubon at the Overlook. 7-9 a.m.** Except for birding in the morning rather than the evening, this is the same as the above. Both the birds and the visitors should be different!
- August 27 Thursday & Each Thurs. **Early Bird Hikes.** Fall migrants should be moving thru. Meet at the gravel parking lot at Celery Bog at 8 a.m. to see who is passing thru. These hikes will be repeated every Thursday morning until no one shows up!
- August 29 Saturday **Noodle Around Field Trip.** Meet at Celery Bog at 7:30 a.m. Destination will depend on where the birds are being reported. It may be Celery Bog or Pine Creek or several different sites.
- September 10 Thursday **Membership Program: Bring your Own.** Everyone is invited to bring 5 minutes of digital pictures or slides to share: birds, plants, animals, vacation sites, etc. The program begins at 7:15 p.m. in Lilly Nature Center at Celery Bog, but come at 6 p.m. to share a **Carry-in Dinner.** Audubon supplies plates, utensils, napkins and beverages. Just bring a dish to share and come enjoy the bounty and the company. This program and the dinner may have to be cancelled depending on local conditions and regulations. Send in your email for up to date cancellations and changes to Susan Ulrich (email p. 11)
- September 12 Saturday **Audubon at the Overlook. 7:30—9:30 a.m.** A half hour later as days are getting shorter. As usual we will meet at the Overlook at the end of the road, see what birds are around, and interact with the park visitors. Birds should be migrating south again..
- Fall Possibility Friday night & Saturday **Hummingbird Banding Trip.** Barny is looking into the feasibility of one of these popular trips where participants see hummingbirds in the hand and learn about banding them. If interested let him know. At Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary south of Connersville. Usually drive-down Friday, camp overnight and see the banding early Saturday morning. It is possible to drive down very early on Saturday instead.