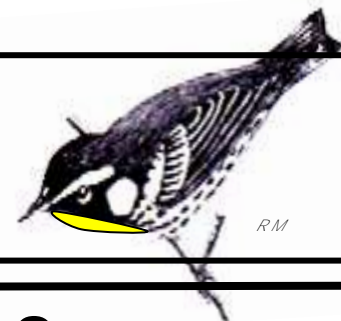


Sycamore Warbler

Volume 46 Issue 2 Summer 2021



Feeder Activity Down?

It may be that fewer birds successfully completed migration thanks to global warming and a stormy spring, but the 17-year Cicadas (genus *Magicicada*) may play a role. Wildlife up and down the food chain is feasting on the bounty they provide. Insects, like cicadas, contain a lot of protein, in fact the same or more protein than beef. But don't fret, as soon as the adults cicadas die off and the young are happily underground sipping on the sap in tree roots, the birds will return to feeders.

Areas where this large brood of cicadas is found could result in more successful wildlife reproduction since so much extra food is available. There should be no hungry fox cubs, baby squirrels, fish, amphibians, and, for most of our species of birds, young birds.

Carolyn Starky wrote May 31 that she had personally seen a pileated woodpecker having a feast, eating one cicada after the other, as it went up the trunk of a mature oak, and multiple squirrels hunting and eating cicadas among the plants. In late May, Doug Johnstone watched a female Wild Turkey with a brood of 9-10 young feeding on cicadas. Their favorite site was under a Amelanchier tree which was loaded with cicadas for about 2 weeks. The

cicada numbers decreased significantly over the three days the turkeys came to feast.

There are annual species of cicadas which emerge in Indiana every year. Their life cycles vary from 1-9 years and they don't have the synchronized emergence of the 17-year cicadas, instead some members of the various annual species of cicadas emerge every year.

For the periodical cicadas who spent the last 17 years feeding on tree roots underground, your best chance of seeing them in numbers are in woodlands that have been around for the past 17 years with minimal disturbance. A few sites to visit would be forested county parks or natural areas in your local county. (assuming it is in this year's 17-year cicada range). In Tippecanoe County the Ross Hill County Park is a good place to visit.

Many NICHES properties located in the 17-year Cicadas' range are also good, e.g. Black Rock & Weiler-Leopold.



1. Backyard Project for Slow Weekends

Plant some seed in your yard; it will grow into more seed. You are probably familiar with sunflower plants, but have you seen the spiky stems of safflower? You will be amazed by the number of seeds just one plant produces. Most people leave most of the crop standing for the birds to enjoy. Some people harvest sunflower and safflower and store it in a cool, dry, rodent-free area until they need it for winter bird feeding. Some other excellent seed-producing plants include coneflowers, coreopsis, primroses, marigolds, poppies, and flax.

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What America's National Parks Need

Americans will be travelling more this summer, much of it to our nation's National Parks. The National Park Conservation Association recently released their list of the top four threats facing our national parks. They are:

- 1) air and water pollution fouling the parks. (Haze pollution threatens 90% of national parks, interfering with the views as well as hurting the lungs of park visitors, wildlife and people in the surrounding area).
- 2) damage caused by climate change.
- 3) the need to enhance protections for park wildlife and
- 4) ensuring adequate funding for operation & maintenance of the parks.

CHAPTER NEWS

In-Person Meetings Resume

Sycamore Audubon Society plans restarting in-person member meetings on September 9th with the popular "Bring Your Own" program. People are invited to bring a short (5 minutes or so) program to share. See the Calendar listing for details of this plus SAS's upcoming activities.

Monticello Report from Rick Read

The hybrid Indiana Dunes Birding Festival went well. All of the presentations were recorded and are now available for viewing.

Locally Rick has been playing the Purple Martin song since May 2 to attract martins to the refurbished nesting house at Altheer Park. He had 2 martins fly over one morning but that's it. His plan is to play the song until the end of June.

Monticello Program July 29

Rick Reed will be giving a talk at 6:30 p.m. in the Monticello Library on July 29 (check at the library in case this changes). The library's July theme is **Tails and Tales**. So Rick is doing a program on "Bird Tails".

He's been looking into the topic and says, "There's lots you don't know about bird tails" He bets you've never seen birds with tails that look like some of the ones he will show, or ones that work like some of the others featured in his program. Come see some amazing bird images from around the world.

Birding on the Fly List...

Don't want to miss an unusual bird sighting nearby or around the state?

Barney sends people on the list an email so those interested can pursue the bird by themselves or maybe via a carpool. Contact him to be on the list. See p. 11.

Rick kept busy this spring giving 5 presentations, working with student groups & leading field trips.

RIP Squad

Invasive plant removal is an activity unaffected by Covid 19 and that does great things for birds by improving the environment and their food supply.

The RIP Squad worked in a variety of parks Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from April 6 to May 27. Unfortunately they didn't cover as much area as they would have liked as several regular members were away for much of the time and many days were rained out.

If you'd like to help reduce the adverse affects of invasive plants in our local parks, call Patty Jones at 765-463-3050 and she will email you the Fall schedule when it comes out.

Earth Day Pop-Up Sale

Thank you, Temple Pearson, for allowing SAS's 2nd Pop Up Plant Sale to be held in front of your yard. This two day sale was amazing! We even did better than last year's sale and raised \$1,100+ for SAS and the West Central Indiana Native Plant Society.

Special thanks are due to all the people that helped at the booth and with set up and take down. They included Connie Brown, Cathy Conner, Marcia Daehler, Temple Pearson, Susan Ulrich, Karen Griggs, Mickey Penrod, and Patty Jones. . Hope we didn't miss anyone.

Farmer's Market

June 16th SAS and INPS held their first plant sale at the WL Farmer's Market. The groups made nearly \$400 in the 3.5 hours the Market was open. There were more donations than the booth could hold. The first sale was a Yellow Cherry Tomato plant from Chuck Tuttle. The

There are 11 NAS chapters in Indiana with a total of 36,800 members, The state has 41 recognized important bird areas.

Last some young, but thriving, Oak Trees donated by the Wasers.

Again many people need to be thanked: Temple Pearson for letting us store plants in advance by her driveway plus all the people who moved the plants to the market, set up the booth and then cleaned up and took it down at the end. The crew consisted of Susan Ulrich, Patty Jones, Mickey Penrod, Mary Sue Waser, Nick Harby, Karen Griggs, Loren Olsen, Martha Lempke, Larry & Becky Theller, Chuck Tuttle, and Dan Childs.

SAS second booth at the market will be Wednesday, September 22nd.

More Thank You's

One goes to Barbara and Russ Allison for the first donation made to the new SAS endowment fund in the Community Foundation of Greater Lafayette.

Another goes to Ann Hunt for an extra donation made to SAS when she renewed.



A real 'Grayfeather' ?

Barney Dunning and Chuck Tuttle spent a week in Michigan for the

Purdue Forestry and Natural History summer practicum course where they helped students learn various field skills. One of the things done during "bird week" is a couple of mornings of bird banding.

This year they caught a Least Flycatcher that had been banded previously. If Barny interpreted his records correctly, this bird is at least 6 years, 11 months, old. The current longevity record for this species (as reported in Cornell's Birds of the World) is 5 years, 11 months. It may be a new age record.

Given that most terrestrial songbirds have about 50% annual survivorship, this flycatcher has really beaten the odds.

See p 8 for a related story.

Native Landscaping



Shirley Heinze Land Trust in northern Indiana has a webinar July 13 on "Native Landscaping for Birds & Insects". Advance registration is required call 219-242-8558 or go to

heinzetrust.org/events.

Important BIRD ALERT



There are reports of a mystery illness in birds causing eye swelling, crusty and blind eyes, and neurological disorders.

Please take down your feeders immediately especially

IF

You see a sick bird in your yard

or

You live in one of the "hotspot" counties: **Monroe, Clark, and Marion.**

The Indiana DNR has received reports of sick and dying songbirds from 15 counties around the state (Reports are from Clark, Delaware, Hamilton, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, LaGrange, Lake, Marion, Monroe, Newton, St. Joseph, Union, Washington, and Whitley). As the investigation continues, the DNR recommends all Hoosiers STATEWIDE remove their birdfeeders (including those for hummingbirds). At this time of year, birds have plenty of food sources and their survival will NOT be threatened by removing your bird feeders.

The Indiana Audubon Society are urging everyone to

- Increase their feeder cleaning procedures, including regular baths with a 10% bleach solution.
- Avoid handling birds or if you need to, wear disposable gloves.
- when removing dead birds, wear disposable gloves and place birds and gloves in a sealable plastic bag to dispose with household trash.
- Keep pets away from sick or dead birds as a precaution. &

Report all sick birds directly to the DNR at bit.ly/INsickwildlife

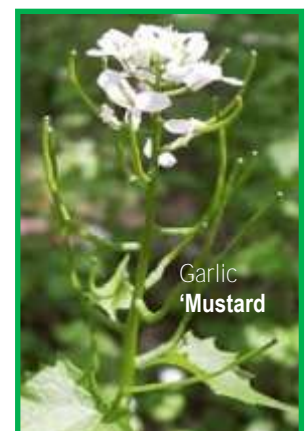


War of the Weeds: Year One Sam Cody, NICHES

After 5 weeks of battling it out in the woodland arena, the dust has finally settled from this year's **War of the Weeds** organized by NICHES Land Trust. Volunteers stepped up from all over the region to fill an astounding 313 volunteer shifts pulling the invading onslaught of garlic mustard.

NICHES was excited to leave multiple local preserves in Tippecanoe County virtually garlic mustard-free this year (a few pesky missed plants remain to tell tales of warning to their noxious comrades). As volunteers tirelessly removed truckload after truckload of the weed, their morale was rallied by the native plants and animals that surrounded them. Snakes, salamanders, orchids, turtles, rare moths, baby squirrels, and the patriotic bald eagle all paid visits to our heroes between skirmishes.

A vibrant understory of freshly liberated spring ephemeral wildflowers cheered them on throughout the fray. Miraculously the only allied losses were 2 water bottles, a pair of sunglasses, and a few unlucky misidentified native plants. NICHES wants to extend a MASSIVE thank you to everyone who joined for this year's War of the Weeds and a thank you to TICT for helping promote the event and spread awareness about Invasive Species control in our area!



CONSERVATION NEWS

Maine's Bees Flying a Little Safer

Maine's legislators just voted to give Honeybees and Maine's 270 species of native bees a boost by banning some of the most harmful neonicotinoid, or "neonic," bee-killing pesticides in residential landscapes.

Neonics play an outsized role in the alarming die-offs bees have shown in recent decades. And it's bigger than Maine. **Across the country, bee safeguards are gaining steam: Massachusetts, Maryland, Vermont and Connecticut have all enacted strong neonic restrictions.** There is more bee-saving legislation on the table. From New Jersey to New Mexico, state legislators are getting the message and introducing popular legislation to protect our bees.

A group called **Environment America** is looking beyond legislation by states. Across the country, its network is 1) calling on Amazon to stop the sale of bee-killing pesticides, 2) working to keep these pesticides out of wildlife refuges and 3) urging the Environmental Protection Agency to ban the worst uses of Neonics nationwide.



Rah, Rah, for RAWA

America's wildlife is under threat like never before. More than one third of all species are at risk of extinction, many within decades. With degraded habitat, invasive species, and a shifting climate driving global biodiversity loss, action is needed *now*. The **Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA)** – HR3742 is federal legislation that will provide states, territories, and tribes with \$1.4 billion annually to catalyze proactive, on-the-ground, collaborative efforts to restore essential habitat and implement key conservation strategies, as described in each state's Wildlife Action Plan.

That's why it's important that Congress pass the **RAWA** and fix drastic underfunding of local and state efforts to save struggling wildlife before it's too late.

This conservation bill will boost recovery efforts for species at risk like the whooping crane. This elegant bird is a thrilling sight, but with fewer than 830 of them left, they are one of the most endangered birds on the planet. Loss of wetlands has pushed the crane to just slivers of their vital range — simply put, they're running out of space to survive.

The crane is just one of the thousands of species in need of conservation help. The alarming loss of biodiversity is not just a threat to the species themselves, but to the communities, jobs and economies that depend on them. RAWA will fund critical on-the-ground conservation work like habitat restoration and invasive species removal to save threatened wildlife in all 50 states.

If you agree that it is urgent we save America's wildlife before even more species become extinct, send your message to Congress now.

There are so many species that need your voice. Threatened species in our own backyard such as the monarch butterfly here in Indiana are up against our natural world's biggest challenges, including rapidly shrinking habitat. **Speak Up For Nature.**

BEYOND COAL Petitions Given to Duke Energy

Duke Energy Indiana (DEI) customers who volunteer with the Sierra Club's **Beyond Coal Campaign** met with DEI President Stan Pinegar and other executives on June 17 to deliver 618 petitions from Duke customers and talk about their hopes for the outcome of Duke's 20-year energy planning process now underway.

Of those signing the petition, 243 Duke customers cared enough to include personal comments.

The petition reads: "As you develop Duke's 20-year energy plan, we, your customers, urge you to take action on the climate crisis.

- Move beyond coal before 2030
- Eliminate fracked gas plants from your plans
- Transition to 100% affordable, renewable energy before 2030

Fossil fuel pollution harms our environment and climate. Low-income communities and communities of color suffer disproportionate damage that is especially visible during this unprecedented time of global hardship. Utilities across the state and country are moving quickly to provide customers with inexpensive, clean, renewable energy, while protecting impacted communities and workers in the process."

On the video call with Pinegar, the Indiana Beyond Coal volunteer leaders from Greater Lafayette and Carmel (including students, public officials and grandparents) shared their personal stories explaining why it is important that Duke retire their coal plants and replace them with clean energy and energy efficiency by 2030.


Duke customers wanting to sign a petition should go to:

sc.org/getmovingduke

IAS Hummingbird Migration Festival Saturday July 31

The **Indiana Audubon Hummingbird Migration Celebration** at the Indiana Audubon Society Mary Gray sanctuary, is a festival for the tiny gem, the Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Multiple sponsors and partners provide an opportunity for all to learn about these amazing little birds, how to attract them, and how to keep them coming year after year.

Activities include watching hummingbird banding demonstrations to view hummingbirds up close, guided nature walks, a native plant sale, programs about birds and other pollinators, kid's activities, vendor booths, live music, and more.



2021 Celebration Program Guide Schedule of Events

Bird Banding Demonstrations at the Demo Tent
 9:15am-11:00am- Hummingbirds with Amy Wilms
 10:00am-3:00pm Songbirds With Libby Keyes
 12:30pm-2:30pm- Hummingbirds with Amy Wilms

Markle Barn Programs
 9:30am- Turtle Time!
 10:30am- Wetland Safari
 11:30am- Creek Walk
 12:30pm- Nature Journaling:
 Observation and Curiosity
 1:30pm- Turtle Time!
 2:30pm- Wetland Safari
 3:30pm- Nature Journaling:
 Observation and Curiosity

Amphitheater Programs
 11:00am- Live Birds of Prey
 with Take Flight!
 Sponsored by Wild Birds
 Unlimited Carmel

Brooks Hall Presentations
 10:00am- Small but Mighty: The
 amazing adaptations of hummingbirds!
 1:30pm- Sam's program
 3:00pm- Small but Mighty: The
 amazing adaptations of hummingbirds!

Small Shelter Activities
 Family Activities All Day!

**Hummingbird Friendly
Native Plant Sale**
 In the tent canopy near the Small Shelter
 all day, while supplies last!

Large Shelter Hikes
 9:00am- Morning Bird Hike
 9:30am- Nature Hike
 10:00am- Fungus Amongus Hike
 10:30am- Native Plant Hike
 11:00am- Nature Hike
 12:00pm- Wildflowers, Trees,
 and Caterpillar Connection Walk
 12:30pm- Afternoon Bird Hike
 1:00pm- Habitat Hike
 1:30pm- Native Plant Hike
 2:00pm- Fungus Amongus Hike
 3:00pm- Nature Scavenger Hunt

The Upper Markle Barn – Throughout the Day
 The Music of The Years
 Connorsville Art Association

Early Bird Pricing is \$12/person. Children under 16 years of age are free. Bring the entire family for a day at Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary. Tickets are \$15 the day of the event. To register in advance: go to Indianaaudubon.com/events.

Program sponsors include Indiana Audubon; Wild Birds Unlimited- Carmel; Robert Cooper Audubon Society.

#21 in 21: Lakefront Shorebirds Field Trip

Date: Sat, Aug 7, 2021 Miller Beach 860 N Lake St, Gary, IN 46403, Gary

Indiana Audubon Society is returning to Lake Michigan for a late summer tour for some prime shorebirds along the lakefront. Registered Participants will meet at the Miller Beach, Lake St. Parking lot at 7am CT/8am ET time for a morning of shorebird pursuit, with the early, larger shorebirds being the target species of the morning.

It's the window for a wide selection of shorebirds, from larger Willets, Whimbrels, and Godwits, and smaller Red Knots, Baird's Sandpipers, and plovers. The Endangered Piping Plover is also possible. The trip concludes around 11am, and may visit a few other lakefront sites during the morning depending on birding conditions. This is one of 21 trips scheduled by IAS in 2021.

Participants should be prepared to pay small parking fees for Miller Beach. Participants will meet IAS member, Julie Bonemma on site. If you have questions, go to Indianaaudubon.org and check events and contact info.

Registration is free for IAS members, and \$10 for non-IAS members.

Icarus Technology Accelerates Migration Science

by Karen Griggs

"Why are you doing that?"

A visitor asked Dr. Barny Dunning that question about the reason he was holding a bright red cardinal gently in the shade of the tall oak and hickory trees. He patiently explained that bird banding leads to scientific knowledge about bird migration.

Bird banding demonstrations at the Wa-bah-shi-kah Nature Center in Battleground include setting out mist nets and carefully removing the birds one at a time for recording descriptive information and banding. Any future birder that sees the bird will be able to report that the banded bird was found at a new site, possibly even in another country.

Barny Dunning, Mickey Weeks, and Sally Weeks have held several of these demonstrations at "Wednesdays in the Wild," a series of public programs sponsored by the city and county parks departments and the local environmental organizations (NICHES Land Trust, Sycamore Audubon, INPS, and others—see the new program list on p.10). As Purdue University faculty members, they have been featured speakers at events held by the Sycamore Audubon Society at the Lilly Nature Center.

Bird and animal migrations were studied in the past. Some studies of hibernation require trapping and placing radio telemetry collars on the animals and following them around with hand-held antennae.

According to Sonia Shah, a science journalist writing in the New York Times magazine (*Animal Planet*, January 17, 2021), thousands of animals and insects will be tagged with ultra-light GPS identifiers and tracked by the International Space Station. The International Cooperation for Animal Research Using Space (ICARUS) project originated with Martin Wikelski, a biologist in Germany, and George Swenson, a radio engineer.

The significance of the worldwide animal tracking system is enormous. Diseases that were formerly thought to be transmitted by certain animals such as a herd of gazelles that were suspected of spreading foot-and-mouth disease, yet tracking they moved more slowly than the disease.

Solar power and lightweight, low-cost GPS devices have changed zoology. Studies of oilbirds and storks, for example, have revealed the role of tree seed dispersal (oilbirds) and stork migration to remote desert sites. Shah observed scientists tagging cuckoos in hickory-oak forest in Illinois. By using the new space station technology, the decline in cuckoos may shown to be linked to the loss of forested South American habitat where the cuckoos lost winter sites due to agriculture

Yellowstone Area: no mining for 20 years

Dozens of wildlife species in the surrounding area of Yellowstone National Park are better protected thanks to a new ruling.

Earlier this month, US Interior Secretary and former Montana congressman, Ryan Zinke, approved a 20-year ban on mineral mining in the public areas north of the park.

The ban was supported by a host of Montana businesses and organizations as a way to preserve these popular recreational areas, as well as protecting the pristine landscape and the elk, bears, and wolves that frequent the area.

"I'm a pro-mining guy. I love hardrock [mining]," said Zinke, according to the *Associated Press*. "But there are places to mine and places not to mine."

The legislation takes a direct stance against the Lucky Minerals mining company after they drafted two excavation plans to hunt for gold, silver, and minerals inside of the 47 square miles of public land.

Though the ban does not affect the company's pre-existing claims or claims on private lands it does inhibit the company's ability to expand their mining onto the surrounding public lands for a more wide-scale excavation which is a deterrent to their proceeding.

Conservationists hope that, they will be able to pass a permanent ban in the coming years.

2. Backyard Project for Slow Weekends

Create a Brush Pile

To protect birds from cold and wind, place four logs or thick branches about six feet long in a square. On top of these, place five or six thinner limbs, propping them against each other to form an inverted cone, or tepee shape. The leafy ends of the branches should be toward the ground. Place smaller branches, again with the leafy ends down, against the uprights to fill in the spaces. This allows roosting birds access, but keeps out nighttime predators such as raccoons or cats. The pile can be a great winter hideout for rabbits, too, if you keep two of the corners of the four bottom logs at least four inches apart before adding the branches. Make the brush pile thickest on the side facing the prevailing winds. Add more branches as the pile breaks down over the months and years.

Do not add soil or compost to the pile, because the weight will crush it.

Cleaner Air Helps Bird Health, too

Countless human lives have been saved in the last forty years since pollution regulations were signed into U.S. law—but tackling dirty air has also been saving the birds.

A new large-scale study conducted by scientists at Cornell University and the University of Oregon found that improved air quality under a federal program to reduce ozone pollution may have averted the loss of 1.5 billion birds during the past four decades. **That's nearly 20% of birdlife in the United States today.**

"Our research shows that the benefits of environmental regulation have likely been underestimated," says Ivan Rudik, the study's lead author and Ruth and William Morgan Assistant Professor at Cornell's Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management. "Reducing pollution has positive impacts in unexpected places and provides an additional policy lever for conservation efforts."

Ozone is a gas that occurs in nature but is also produced by power plants, factories, and car emissions. It can be good or bad. A layer of ozone in the upper atmosphere protects the Earth from the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun. But ground-level ozone is hazardous and is the main pollutant in smog.

To examine the relationship between bird abundance and air pollution, the researchers used models that combined bird observations from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's ebird program with ground-level pollution data and existing air quality regulations.

They tracked monthly changes in bird abundance, air quality, and regulation status for 3,214 U.S. counties over a span of 15 years. The team focused on the NOx (nitrogen oxide) Budget Trading Program, which was implemented by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to protect human health by limiting summertime emissions of ozone precursors from large industrial sources.

The study, published in *The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, suggests that ozone pollution is most detrimental to the small migratory birds (such as sparrows, warblers, and finches) that make up 86 percent of all North American land bird species. Ozone pollution directly harms birds by damaging their respiratory system, and indirectly affects populations by harming their food sources.

"Not only can ozone cause direct physical damage to birds, but it also can compromise plant health and reduce numbers of the insects that birds consume," explains study author Amanda Rodewald, Garvin Professor at the Cornell Department of Natural Resources and the Environment and Director of the Center for Avian Population Studies at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Bees Sense Covid

Can bees track COVID-19?

Dutch researchers say they have trained bees to stick out their tongues when presented with the virus's scent, acting as a kind of rapid test.

The scientists said teaching bees to diagnose the coronavirus could help fill a gap in low-income countries with limited access to more sophisticated technology. Report from the *Washington Post*.



Wabash River Exhibit

New Harmony in southern Indiana is hosting a new exhibit Oct 2 to Nov 14. It is a partnership with the Indiana Humanities Council and the Smithsonian Institute's Water/Ways tour. The exhibit illustrates the river's beauty, both scientific and cultural. The Wabash drains 3/4 of Indiana, flowing from its headwaters just inside the Ohio boundary in the NE and emptying into the Ohio River at the southwest tip of the state.

Additional activities will take place to celebrate the river, such as kayak trips, driving tours and speakers on environmental issues. A similar exhibit will take place in February 2022 in Wayne County.



Radioactive Buzz

.Nuclear fallout: Justin Richardson, a bio-geochemist at the University of Massachusetts told Science magazine that American honey still carries traces of a radioactive element from atom-bomb testing during the Cold War. According to the new study, the levels of contamination found in the honey are not harmful to humans but the research raises questions about how cesium has impacted bees and highlights the long-term effects of the fallout. After the Chernobyl disaster in 1986, scientists discovered that radiation could threaten the reproduction of bumblebee colonies.

Nature Notes & News

● Feb. 17 Gail Oversholser and her father from Delphi, drove St. Rd. 18 toward Brookston and counted fifty American Bald eagles along that stretch of the Tippecanoe River.

● March 9 John Skene included a Great-horned Owl on his list of birds for Celery Bog. The owl had a mate & nested there. Below is a picture taken later in by Gale Turco of the two young.



● Barny had "two bits to celebrate" on March 10. First, that morning he met the Thellers at the Bicentennial Nature Area where they enjoyed comparing Red-breasted and Common Mergansers, (both males & females.)

Second, he noted at Celery Bog "there have been reports and photos of a Greater Scaup and also a hybrid Blue-winged Teal X Northern Shoveler—the latter looks mostly like a male shoveler but has a partial white crescent on the face among other things indicative of a hybrid." (Ed. Dan Miller's photo is at the top of column 3).

● In early March if you went to the "news" section on E-bird and read the article on the effects COVID-19 had on eBird records, you may have noticed a photo of a European Robi n which was taken by local birder, Larry Theller.

● Shelly Foran had a metal roof put on her house and this spring Turkey Vultures are using it as a roost. They sit on the ridge, often with their wings spread out like a cormorant's when the latter leaves the water.

● A flock of 13 White Pelicans flying over Lake Freeman was reported by Grant Martin on March 20. He notes "We've seen White Pelicans in

other years on Freeman during migration, but this was the largest flock so far." Ten Great-blue Herons followed them 5 minutes later.

● On the 24th, Rick Read spotted his first Common Loon of the year on Lake Freeman in Monticello.

● March 29 Dan Miller had a flock of White Pelicans land at Celery Bog before shortly taking off again.

● April reports started with Ed Hopkins discovery of 2 female Surf Scoters at Bicentennial Nature Area on the 20th. The Thellers saw them on the 23rd, and Barny Dunning saw them there on the morning of the 24th.

● A week later on the 27th Barny Dunning wrote: "Celery Bog is probably hopping this morning." His yard had singing Yellow-throated & Tennessee Warblers, along with a lingering Red-breasted Nuthatch. Others had new reports that day, too. Chuck Tuttle and Larry Theller had their first Baltimore Orioles & Larry also reported a Pine Siskin. Seeing their reports. Joan Samuels put up her hummingbird feeder that orioles loved last year along with grape jelly, and "like magic, a male Baltimore Oriole showed up!"

● On the 28th the first hummingbird showed up at Larry & Becky Theller's feeder.

● May 2 a Black-necked Stilt was spotted at Celery Bog. Of course, Dan Miller got a picture to document it.

● This spring, Bill & Marilyn Heinze wrote "for the first time in 50 years of monitoring our bird feeders, we have a pair of bluebirds."

● May 6's Early Bird hike saw a number of arrivals although it was a bit quiet. The first Eastern Wood-Pewees, Indigo Buntings, & Red-eyed Vireos, showed up, along with scattered warbler species such as American Redstart, Black-throated Green, Magnolia, & Nashville. One highlight of the Early Bird Hike was a female Blue Grosbeak below Lilly Nature Center,

● While camping in Maumee Bay State Park on May 6, Larry & Becky Theller saw a Kirtland's Warbler thanks to the help of some other birders. It was species 700 for Larry and



Hybrid Shoveler x Blue wing Teal

701 for Becky. Later, in McGee Marsh, they met Fritz Davis who helped them add another new species for their list: a Wilson's Phalarope. Congrats!

● A male Summer Tanager made regular visits to the suet feeder of Nelson & Janet Moore the first week of May. The same bird or a different one did this last year. They also had a Red-breasted Nuthatch show up in March that was still coming May 9.

● Barny Dunning emailed on May 7, "Being stuck at home all morning working on grades has its advantages. At different times I had the following at my home feeders: 4 Pine Siskins, male Summer Tanager, male Rose-breasted Grosbeak". It may be the 1st Summer Tanager he's had at his feeder..

● Overall it migration was slow. To quote Barny: "numbers of things like warblers and flycatchers have not been eye-opening". In spite of that, Mark Arvin found 20+ species of warblers at the Tippecanoe Amphitheater the second week of May.

● Both Barny Dunning and Trumond Best visited Celery Bog May 15 and found a number of warblers & vireos, including Blue Headed & Philadelphia Vireos. They noted less bird activity as the Palm and Yellow-rumped Warblers had migrated north.

● The red-phase Screech Owl seen roosting at Celery Bog (photo in last **Warbler**) was still there May 15th. It had been joined by a gray-phase bird. The gray bird seems smaller so is most likely to be a male with the red-phased bird being a female.

● In mid-May the east side of Lafayette's Meier's store produced Lark Sparrows who stayed for at least a week. Sam Hartzler saw a Clay-colored Sparrow there too.

● May 16 the Thellers had 20 Pine Siskins stop by to surprise them.

Hope for Endangered Southern Orcas

Following a lawsuit by the Center for Biological Diversity and allies, federal fishery managers have proposed a change to the Pacific salmon fishery plan that would help save Southern Resident orcas from starving.

The proposal would limit nontribal commercial Chinook salmon fishing in years with fewer than 966,000 estimated salmon leaving food for the endangered killer whales to eat. Their population is down to 74 individuals — mostly due to decline in salmon which has left them with too little food.

"Without more protections, we'll watch Southern Resident killer whales continue to spiral toward extinction," said Center attorney Julie Teel Simmonds.

Greater Lafayette Climate Action

Your Input Wanted: Recently Tippecanoe elected officials (Mayor John Dennis, Mayor Tony Roswarski, and Tippecanoe County Commissioner David Byers) held a public event at Riehle Plaza to announce their coordinated work on developing and implementing a **Greater Lafayette Climate Action Plan**.

SAS commends them and their staffs for their on this topic. It is clear that the changing climate is having immense adverse impacts on the Earth that we, and trillions of other species, including the world's 10,000 birds live on.

By proactively addressing climate change through mitigation and adaptation initiatives, these three agencies are committing to collectively lead economic, social, and environmental improvements throughout the region. The benefits for making this investment include the following:

- Improved quality of life for residents
- Better management of our region's resources
- Economic resilience
- New development opportunities
- Preservation of vital ecosystems
- Improved health outcomes

Collaboration and engagement from residents, local industries, institutions, and businesses will be vital in the development of the Climate Action Plan. You can find info on Tippecanoe's action plan at the following website. It also contains a link where individuals can weigh in via a survey. Please check it out and give them your input.

(<https://greaterlafayetteind.com/climate-action-plan/>).

● A flock of 13-14 Common Terns showed up at Bicentennial Nature Area May 17. Fritz Davis reported them at 4 p.m. and Truman Best saw them about an hour later.

● May 17-19 a female Yellow-throated Warbler came repeatedly to nesting material at Susan Ulrich's, necessitating the addition of more material. The same (or another) female made off with more loads on May 27th and in early June there was another. Susan was also surprised to see a brief appearance by a female Red-breasted Nuthatch on May 17.

● Mary Cutler wrote on May 19 "nature in my backyard provides gifts beyond measure! Sitting out tonight, enjoying the after-rain burst of bird song, when the flash of oriole orange

drew my attention to a cluster of silver maple leaves in the big tree out front. Looking up, what do I spot? An oriole nest!"



● Nick Harby noted May 24 "Last week I noticed swallows picking up mud off the bank of the Wabash here in Lafayette. I thought that was odd until I remembered that they weren't eating the mud but Cliff Swallows use mud to build their nests". When he

Celebrate Some of the Good Things

Deep Sea Oil Drilling ended off Coast of New Zealand South Island

In March, the last oil exploration permit for the coast of New Zealand's south island was surrendered. This leaves only Taranaki still operational.

Greece Going Solar

In western Greece, municipalities banded together and created the biggest European social solar policy project: 108 MW of photovoltaics. It will provide free energy to 5,000 currently vulnerable households. It is hoped this project will eventually encourage similar projects, liberating Greece from energy poverty.

took the trail past the Sagamore Parkway bridge on May 24 he saw over 100 new nests on the downstream face of the bridge, and swallows flying around all over the place. There is also a smaller population of Cliff Swallow nests on the upstream side of the Columbia St. bridge, that you can see from pedestrian bridge.

● By May 30 Multiple people got to see the Mississippi Kite(s) hanging out in the dead trees SE of the corner of Salisbury Street and Cumberland Avenue in West Lafayette. Best views are typically from Covington Street, one block east of Salisbury and parking there is easier.

● Another bird being reported in late May was a Common Gallinule from the Celery Bob area. The location is

Continued on p. 11

Celebrating our 20th YEAR! ~ "WEDNESDAYS in the WILD" ~ JULY - AUGUST 2021

REGISTRATION is required by noon on Monday prior to program: 765-567-2993 or mcutler@tippecanoe.in.gov

Natural History Talks/Workshops/Field Trips: 1-3pm OR As Noted

Like us on Facebook at "Wednesdays in the Wild"

**** Facial coverings and/or physical distancing are highly recommended. ****

- Jul 7th 1-3pm Trekkin' with Turtles at Celery Bog** ----- BINOCULARS helpful ----- outdoor pgm—CB/AMPH
Amber Slaughterbeck (Regional Specialist at the Indiana Invasives Initiative) also has a passion to educate others about native turtles and their conservation. At this program she will describe turtle habits and habitats, then lead a hike to look for the common turtles found at Celery Bog: red-eared sliders, painted turtles, common snapping turtles and - if we're lucky! - eastern box turtles! Amber will also be selling turtle rescue t-shirts (\$10, cash/check) to support her turtle rescue organization. *Limited to 30 participants*
- Jul 14th 1-3pm Native Plants in the City** ----- Limited parking: join 12:45pm CARPOOL from WNC/Battle Ground----- outdoor pgm—SC RES
Sally Carter's small yard is a native plant oasis, but her journey to native plant appreciation was not as you might expect! Learn the joys and challenges of creating and maintaining a mini-habitat in the midst of the city. The program will also include a tour of the Erie St. Sharing Garden led by Margy Deverall (Lafayette City Planner). *Limited to 12 participants*
- Jul 21st 1-3pm Butterflies of Tippecanoe County** ----- BINOCULARS helpful ----- outdoor pgm—CB/AMPH
Retired Purdue Entomologist Jon Neal will give a brief outdoor presentation on identification techniques related to local butterflies and then head out into the planted prairies and savannas of Celery Bog in search of these jewels of summer! *Limited to 30 participants*
- Jul 28th 1-3pm Trails Along the Tippecanoe at Moyer-Gould Woods** --- Battle Ground CARPOOL 12:30pm --- outdoor pgm—NICHES/MGW
Lace up your hiking shoes for a 1.5 mile walk along the hills bordering the Tippecanoe River. Justin Harmeson (Land Steward with NICHES Land Trust) will showcase the Moyer-Gould Woods property in Carroll County. See how active management helps bolster native flora and fauna populations. This hike will be easy to moderate in difficulty. *Limited to 20 participants*
- Aug 4th 1-3pm Exploring Swanson's Bluff** ----- CARPOOL leaves LNC 12:15pm ----- outdoor pgm—NICHES/SB
Join Bob Easter (NICHES Stewardship Director) for a hike through the Swanson's Bluff property along the Big Pine Creek in Warren County. Explore the developing savanna restoration as well as the unique sandstone barrens and other botanical and geological features of the property, which is normally a creek access only preserve. The hike will be easy to moderate in difficulty. *Limited to 20 participants*
- Aug 11th 1-3pm Water Quality 101: Assessing Our Local Waterways** --- Bring boots or wear old shoes that can get wet --- outdoor pgm—WNC
Does a quick glance at a river or stream tell us all there is to know about its water quality? Naturalist Mary Cutler will take participants into a local stream to take a snapshot of its health, utilizing the protocols taught in the Hoosier Riverwatch Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Program. Learn how to use habitat assessment, chemical analysis and biological monitoring to assess local waterways. **NOTE:** Bring boots or wear old shoes that can get wet, as we will be wading in Burnett's Creek. *Limited to 20 participants*
- Aug 18th 1-3pm Rolling on the River: Songs & Stories About Our State River** -- Bring a camp chair for the concert -- outdoor pgm—DF PARK
Naturalist Mary Cutler will lead a hike along the banks of the Wabash River and share its human and natural history. Discover the connections between the Teays River, glacial Lake Maumee, ice sheets and our current waterway. Learn about the people whose lives were shaped by the river, and about the wildlife that call this place home. **We'll conclude the hike with a special treat:** enjoying a mini-concert by Scott Greeson on the Davis Ferry Pedestrian Bridge, where we'll gain insight into the inspiration that waterways have always provided musicians. Bring a camp chair for the concert. *Limited to 30 participants*
- Aug 25th 1-3pm A Sampling of Species from the Martell Arboretums** ----- outdoor pgm—WFC
Lenny Farlee (Extension Forester at Purdue's Hardwood Tree Improvement and Regeneration Center) will lead an easy walk to two arboretums at Martell Forest: the Xi Sigma Pi Forestry Honor Society Arboretum and the Van Camp Arboretum. We will see some common & not-so-common species of trees and shrubs planted to assist student learning and adult education efforts. Basic tree ID will be covered and resources will be shared to assist with your own tree self-discovery! *Limited to 30 participants*

LOCATIONS of these FREE PROGRAMS which are OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

NOTE: limited number of participants so RSVP is REQUIRED by noon on Monday prior to program!

CB/AMPH (Celery Bog Amphitheater): 1620 Lindberg Rd, between Northwestern & McCormick in West Lafayette.

DF PARK (Davis Ferry Park): On North Ninth St at the Wabash River, Lafayette, 47901.

NICHES/MGW (Moyer-Gould Woods - 4620 N US-421, Delphi 46923): Meet at 1pm in property parking lot (1 ¼ miles north of SR 18/US 421 intersection) OR join 12:30pm carpool from Battlefield Monument parking lot off N. 9th St. in Battle Ground.

NICHES/SB (Swanson's Bluff): Meet at 1pm at property in Williamsport (map will be provided to those registered for the hike) OR join 12:15pm carpool from Lilly Nature Center (LNC) parking lot.

SC RES (Sally Carter's Residence): Meet at Sally's residence, 115 Erie St., Lafayette. Parking is limited; join the 12:45 WNC carpool, if possible.

WFC (Wright Forestry Center at Martell Forest): 1007 N 725 W, West Lafayette, IN 47906.

WNC (Wah-ba-shik-a Nature Center): In Battle Ground at the Tippecanoe Battlefield off North Ninth St.

FOR MORE INFORMATION or TO HELP WITH PLANNING, contact:

Mary Cutler 765-567-2993; Dan Dunten 765-775-5172; Joan Mohr Samuels 765-532-3245, mohrsamuels@comcast.net

SPONSORED BY

Mary Cutler, Naturalist, Tippecanoe County Park & Rec. Dept. — Sycamore Audubon Society — NICHES Land Trust
Dan Dunten, Lilly Nature Center Director, West Lafayette Parks & Rec. Dept. — West Central Chapter of INPS

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): _____

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

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

☐ New Friend member ☐ Renewing Friend

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

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

Total enclosed \$ _____

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Love Your Local River?

June is National Rivers Month and we are honoring rivers by featuring them and water in Tidbits. American Rivers, a national organization is celebrating all the ways **Life Needs Rivers** by launching a one-stop shop for river lovers. Click www.americanrivers.org/life-needs-rivers/ for more info.

Nature notes continued.

described as "cattails near Walmart". Again, this is not a bird regularly seen during summer in our area.

● Fritz Davis reported that the two Common Gallinules which were present for the past week are still at Celery Bog. He reiterated Barny's comments about their movement in and out of the cattails on the eastern edge, but added they could also be seen from vantage points other than the trail north of the point.

● John Skene saw an Upland Sandpiper May 29 in what was described last year as "its traditional breeding location" in Tippecanoe County. The location is along County Road 900 West, south of the intersection of that road with County Road 750 North. C.R. 900. Upland Sandpipers have decreased very strongly during the age of row-crop agriculture (they are a

prairie specialist)

● On the morning of June 5 Ed and Lise Schools looked for and were able to find the Upland Sandpipers John Skene reported between N900 and N850 on W 700 N.



● June 6 David Hovde reported a Black-necked Stilt on the south side of Lafayette in a field puddle northwest of Veterans Memorial Parkway. This species is starting to show up in a number of counties and has even nested locally at least once.

Tidbits

◆ Even as the population has grown, Las Vegas has cut water consumption dramatically in the past two decades.

◆ Arizona has established seven under ground water banks.

◆ Phoenix recycles most of its wastewater.

◆ Preserving water in Los Angeles saves as much energy as direct energy-efficiency programs, a recent study showed.

◆ More than 2/3 of the water people need for survival comes from rivers.

◆ New York, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Denver & Phoenix (and likely your community too) get all or most of their drinking water from rivers.

◆ 44% of America's waterways are too polluted for fishing or swimming.

◆ The name Cormorant covers both species that prefer fresh water as well as those that prefer salt water habitats. The more marine species are often referred to as "shags"

◆ Freshwater makes up less than 3% of the earth's water supply, yet is home to almost 50% of fish species.

◆ The term "ecology" was coined by Ernst Haeckel, a German biologist back in 1866. It's derived from the Greek *oikos* meaning house or habitation.



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

Summer Sycamore Audubon Calendar

Audubon Programming continues to be in flux. Field Trips are outdoors so distancing should be sufficient. Monthly membership meetings are switching back to in person September 9.

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| July 11
Sunday | Audubon at the Overlook. 7 pm - sundown. Check out the activity of the summer prairie in the evening. Meet at the Overlook at the end of the park road. |
| July various
Sat &/or Sun | Hummingbird banding at Mary Gray Bird. Indiana Audubon Society. Join Amy Wilms, at Mary Gray Sanctuary to observe these tiny jewels being banded. There are multiple dates banding will be done. Go to indianaaudubon.org for info on the time & days, weather permitting. Rain will cancel banding events. This is not part of the Festival listed on p. 5 and no charge was listed. |
| July 31
Saturday | Native Garden Tour. Bob Easter, NICHES Stewardship Director, has been turning his yard into a native plant haven. Meet at his house, 23 Circle Lane Court, West Lafayette, at 1 p.m. (This is west of town, Take Division Rd. where it starts at Newman Ro. Make a right onto Valley Drive then turn left on Circle Lane. Circle Court Lane is the next right. The house is on the corner. |
| August 18
Wednesday | Migrating Flocks 7-9 pm. Looking for early fall migrating flocks that will be passing by. Meet at Celery Bog gravel parking area. |
| August 26.
Thursday | Early Bird Walks at Celery Bog. This is the start of this fall's Early Bird Walks which are held weekly. Meet at the gravel parking lot at 8 a.m. Lilly Nature Center. Bird for an hour before class, work, or whatever else you have that day. |
| September 9
Thursday | Fall Kickoff Membership Meeting. Bring Your Own 5-8 minute program featuring photos of nature, birds, summer trips, etc. Judging by all the pictures the editor has seen on Facebook. We have lots of really good photographers out there. Come and share your favorite pictures with us. 7:15 p.m. Lilly Nature Center. There will not be a carry in dinner this year. |