

Sycamore Warbler

Volume 47 Issue 1

Spring 2022



Photo of Barney at Feast of the Hunter's Moon taken by Rick Read

Congratulations Barny: Earl Brooks Award Winner

Barney Dunning, SAS's president, received the 2021 Earl Brooks Award at the October annual meeting of the Indiana Audubon Society (IAS). This award is given to a member who has advanced the conservation of natural resources in service to the Society.

Here's what IAS had to say: "This year's award was presented to Dr. John B. "Barny" Dunning for his contributions to Indiana's ornithological knowledge. His reach goes beyond his own contributions, through the many students he has inspired and mentored over the years as a professor at Purdue University in the College of Agriculture. During the academic year, Barny helps guide students in designing and conducting research in both masters and doctorate degree programs. Barny also teaches students each year at the Summer Practicum, a 6-week Forestry and Wildlife student summer program required of all Forestry and Natural Resources graduates. During the practicum, held near Iron River, MI, Barny teaches bird banding, sound ID and other

ornithology topics.

For Indiana Audubon, Barny has held a spot on the Indiana Bird Records Committee (IBRC) for about as long as anyone who has served on it. Barny often hosts the committee's annual meetings, and allows for the storage of IBRC records on the Purdue campus when needed.

For all of this and more, Barney Dunning is deserving of the Indiana Audubon's Earl Brooks Award. His contributions to the state have benefited Hoosier birders for decades, and will continue to do so into the foreseeable future."

"Golden Bird" : A Second State Record

If you can't find "Golden Bird" in your field guide, it's because it was the nickname the discoverers gave to a rare oriole that showed up at their feeders in Warren County.

Louise Decker and her daughter, Ruth Scott, were surprised by the bird shortly before Thanksgiving. They knew it was an oriole but not either of the two species they were familiar with. It had a black throat but was larger than the juvenile Orchard and had a line through the eye and an orange upper breast. It was the size of a Baltimore Oriole but that black throat and eyeline ruled it out. Using field guides they identified it as an immature, out of range, Bullock's Oriole. Bullock's is found in the western states. This individual evidently migrated eastward instead of south, and took up residence at the Decker's feeders where it enjoyed sunflower seeds and a little suet.

Ulrich, who compiles the Warren County counts. She went out and confirmed the ID and passed the info on to Barney Dunning. He, Ed Hopkins and two of Barny's students, Aidan

Rominger and Luke Wilson, were invited by Louise to try to see. and get pictures, of the bird. The bird was very cooperative. An article on the discovery of this bird is expected to appear in a future issue of the **Indiana Audubon Quarterly**.

As a 'thank you' to Louise Decker and her daughter, Ruth, for sharing the information with SAS and allowing people in their home to document it as the second time the species is known to have appeared in Indiana, SAS is making Louise Decker an Honorary Lifetime Chapter member.

It is important to note and document unusual bird species. If you see something you don't know or that you can identify but shouldn't be here, please pass the information on to Barney Dunning, or if you can't reach him. someone else on SAS's Board. All national, state and local bird lists have been developed by birders who reported their data. eBay is the new option. It is now the main world wide repository of bird sighting information.

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Louise had helped on Warren County May Counts in the past, and, as the bird continued to come to their feeders, called Susan



CHAPTER NEWS

Both Live & Zoom Meetings Start this Month

In March, SAS will start to have live meetings, but the zoom option will continue. To join via zoom email Barny Dunning (see p. 11). Programs start at 7:15 p.m. In person will be the Lilly Nature Center. See the calendar on p 4.

Wanted for Celery Bog

There's a new display at Lilly Nature Center featuring bird nests and eggs. Dan Dunten is looking for two nests to complete it. He has wooden eggs for a number of species but needs two final nests. One is that of a Mourning Dove, the other of a Chipping Sparrow. Contact him if you happen to have or know of one he can have.

Some Local Events Coming up in the next few months

March 5 – Prophetstown S.P.

Invasive Removal Training for homeowners

March 22 – Prophetstown S.P.

River Clean-up

April 23 – Garden Expo

Big plant plus more sale

May 6 & 7 – Prophetstown S.P.

Native Plant Sale

May 14 – Soil & Water District

Native Plant Sale

May 21 – MindBOGgling Event at Celery Bog 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

June 11 – Outdoor Explore a multi-venue event where people get to try out various outdoor activities.

SAS will participate in the three events listed in italics. A few helpers are needed at each. Contact Susan Ulrich p. 11 if you can assist or have any questions about the following:

Garden Expo:

Donations of plants and other related garden items are needed along with one or two people to help move and set up the booth 2:30 Friday afternoon. As well as one or two people to help Saturday between 9 and 3:30 p.m. selling plants and taking down the booth.

Mind BOGgling Event:

Info on p.3 and also on calendar.

Outdoor Explore:

SAS can use a volunteer or two to help with the birdwatching table. SAS is a sponsor for this event.

Audubon Nature Club

A right is a picture of Rick Read showing Audubon club participants how to use and care for binoculars before going outside and putting them to use looking at birds.

Happenings In Monicello

Tues, Apr 5, 6:30 pm, "*Indiana Birds*", a live presentation at Norway Gardens, 308 W Walleston Ave, Monticello. Identification of Indiana birds commonly seen during summer and how to attract them. Door prizes will be given away.

Wed, Apr 6, 7:00 pm, "*Birding Thailand*", a virtual presentation to Indiana Audubon. See some of the amazing birds photographed during a trip to northern Thailand in Feb 2020. From Falconets to Liociclas, and Minivets to Sunbirds. This is a sampling of what may be seen during Indiana Audubon's trip to Thailand scheduled for Feb 7-18, 2023.

Sat, Apr 23, 7:30 am, *Bird Walk for Earth Day in Monticello*. City Park, 904 City Park Loop. See the return of spring arrivals starting at City Park, then moving on to Altherr Nature Park, 724 S. Main St., Monticello. Expect about 1 hour at each location.

Sat, Apr 23, 9:00 pm, *Owling for Earth Day In Monticello*. City Park, 904 City Park

Loop. His decription: "In about 30 minutes, we hope to see some owls at dusk. In previous years we have seen Eastern Screech-Owls."

Thank You's

Anonymous, who gave a donation in memory of Russ Mumford to the Sycamore Audubon Society's Endowment Fund in the Community Foundation of Greater Lafayette.



SAS To Help NICHES with Grant for Fall Creek Gorge

NICHES Land Trust has applied for a Cornell Land Trust Grant for restoration and maintenance work at Fall Creek Gorge. The property was given to NICHES by the Nature Conservancy because of NICHES record of caring for its properties. The property is a state dedicated Nature Preserve in Warren County, often referred to as "the Potholes".

The grant includes a birding component. Should NICHES get the grant, SAS has agreed to be a listed NICHES partner on it to work on that component. That would include, among other things, developing a species list for the property. Right now the property is closed. Once it opens, SAS will hold field trips there as well as

A Loss for Indiana & SAS

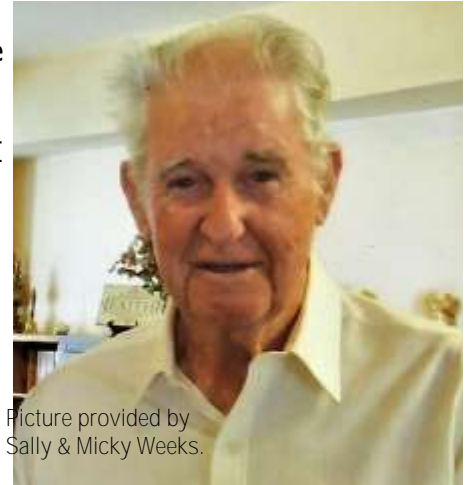
Russell (Russ) Mumford, an honorary member of SAS, and lead author of *Birds of Indiana*, died January 26 at the age of 99. Russ retired from Purdue many years ago. He is the author of numerous publications dealing with birds as well as mammals (especially bats), and was the leading authority in the state in both areas for many years. His first book was *Mammals of Indiana* which he coauthored with John Whitaker.

Russ had two PhD's: one from the University of Michigan in Ornithology, the other from Purdue University in Mammalogy. He had a wonderful dry sense of humor as those who attended programs he gave to SAS in earlier years or saw his contributions to SAS's September "Bring your own Programs" or just talked with him at Sycamore Audubon meetings can attest. Rick Read wrote: "I always enjoyed time with him at SAS meetings and a time or two that we stopped by his house. When age slowed his outdoor birding, I know that he took photos of butterflies and he kept a bird list for species he saw on TV. We have his book on our coffee table. I'm sure he must have done much more for students that I was never able to experience. I admire his love of nature and his sharing it with others."

Russ's extensive career included three trips to Kenya to study bats and attend an International meeting on bats; 6-months teaching at the University of Pretoria in South Africa; 3 trips to Brazil between 1966 and 1973 where he conducted Bat Research for the Smithsonian, and another trip to Brazil in 1975 to the Mata Gross area where he was part of a team determining the site and size for the Pantanal National Park, a park which is similar to the Everglades and about the size of Indiana.

He also enjoyed carving decoys as well as birds and animals, and pen and ink drawing. You can see one of the latter by looking at the Yellow-throated Warbler on the first page of this newsletter..

Mumford's co-author of *Birds of Indiana*, Charles Keller died just a month earlier than Russ, on Christmas Day at the age of 92. He was an avid birder and had worked for Eli Lilly in Indianapolis.



Picture provided by Sally & Micky Weeks.

Birding on the *Fly List*...

Want to hear about unusual birds seen nearby? Barny Dunning sends people on the *Fly List* emails so those interested can pursue the bird(s) by themselves or occasionally via a carpool. Contact him to get on the list. See p.11.

Mind BOGgling Event Returns May 21!

encourage members to visit at other times and report their bird sighting on eBird or directly to SAS.

After a two year Covid hiatus, the Mind BOGgling event is back. It will run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 21, at Celery Bog Nature Park in West Lafayette. **This year's theme is**

What Lives at Celery Bog ?

Friends of Fall Creek Gorge

There is also a group forming under the name "Friends of Fall Creek Gorge". The Friends plans include holding stewardship events at the property. SAS members interested in joining or participating should contact NICHES Land Trust for information.



Hepatica

There will activities for children 1-4 and 5 on up, along with events for other groups including nature hikes, a program on Mammals, why the recent woodland work in the park was done, and lots more.

SAS will have a table in the tent for organizations and is looking for volunteers who can spend an hour or two at the table or at an overlook with a scope and binoculars to talk to people about birds in the area and point out those that may be around along with other critters such as turtles, muskrats, etc. All the human activity in the park may make birding slower than usual, but it **IS** Celery Bog in May, so there is sure to be something to see. If you can help at the booth or on an overlook, please contact Chuck Tuttle or Susan Ulrich (see p. 11)

Bring your own snacks if desired, but there will be a food truck there from noon to one as well as Gibson Ices. Stop by.

CONSERVATION NEWS

EU Developing a Nature Restoration Law

BirdLife International (BI) has been working for years to demonstrate that restoration is one of the most comprehensive and effective solutions to tackle both the climate and biodiversity crises. Now some action—

Will a potential EU's Law make history?

As a result of the commitment undertaken in the Biodiversity Strategy 2030, the European Commission is developing a Nature Restoration Law. If well designed, this law could represent one of the few serious hopes of

halting biodiversity loss in Europe by fundamentally changing the way land, rivers, and seas are used. The proposal is to be published on the 23rd of March. Once passed, EU countries will be obliged to undertake land and water restoration, but it is not clear how much of their territory that will account for.

BI advocates for the target to be clear, quantified and set for 2030, as well as for the adoption of an overarching target to restore at least 15% of the overall European land, seas and rivers.

Goal Set to Protect America's Land & Oceans

On a somewhat similar note, the United States Department of the Interior has laid out a ten-year goal to protect 30% of the U.S. land and ocean by 2030. This is the nation's first established ***national conservation goal***: a vision to help safeguard America's water and wildlife. How it will work and be implemented is crucial and not yet known.

Wolf Protection Restored in Most of US

Feb. 20, a federal judge restored Endangered Species Act protection to gray wolves across most of the United States, reversing a Trump-era rule stripping the safeguards of these top predators. The ruling prohibits wolf hunting and trapping in states outside the northern Rocky Mountains. Wolves in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming are not covered by the ruling, but the work to include them, continues.

Indiana Solar Win

In January, supporters of solar rooftops scored a huge victory at the Indiana Court of Appeals. The Court upheld a fair system for crediting solar owners for the electricity they generate. They rejected an effort by monopoly utilities to restrict solar rights. A broad coalition of solar companies, environmentalists, and consumer advocates and the Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC), prevailed in the appeal.

Other good news is that HB1196 was introduced this session which give homeowners in prohibited homeowner association (HOAs) a path to get approval from their neighborhoods to install solar panels.

The bill further would further protect homeowners rights to install solar panels on their own homes. This is an encouraging sign for solar access rights in Indiana even should the Bill not pass this year.

Whaling News

Iceland ending whaling.

Iceland is one of three countries that still have commercial whaling. That practice will end in 2024 when the current quotas on hunting expires.

The last two countries still allowing commercial whaling are Norway and Japan.

Shown below: Humpbacked Whale



Drilling Opposed in Gulf of Mexico

Over 300 groups petitioned the Biden administration to stop new oil and gas drilling on existing leases in the Gulf of Mexico until a proper study can assess their climate threat. The petition follows a court win blocking the decision to offer 80.8 million more Gulf acres to the oil industry. The best news? The court rejected the lease sale on the basis of climate change.

Pollution from offshore drilling harms both communities and wildlife, from whales to Kemp's Ridley sea turtles. Much of the coastline and communities still suffer from the impacts of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill over 10 years ago — the

largest oil spill in the ocean in history. More recently, the communities experienced damage from Hurricane Ida. The oil and gas is simply not worth the costs these communities end up paying.

"Federal officials have let oil companies drill offshore for decades without ever properly examining the damage," said lawyer Kristen Monsell, who authored the petition.

Spring Sycamore Audubon Calendar 2022

Audubon Programming continues to be in flux. Normal meeting programs are currently hybrid and are expected to remain that way for some time. Field Trips are outdoors so it is a personal choice whether to wear masks.

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|-----------------------|--|
| March 10
Thursday | Program: Merging Analog & Digital PhotoTechniques Alan McConnell, of the Opera House Gallery in Delphi, shows how and why he uses the large format film camera while merging digital techniques to create fine art prints. Program includes sample images from NICHES properties & other area. 7:15 p.m. at Lilly Nature Center or via zoom (email Barny for invite). |
| March 19
Saturday | Audubon at the Overlook. 8:30-10:30 a.m. at the overlook at the end of the road at Prophetstown State Park. Come see what birds we can suss up around the overlook and visit with park visitors. |
| March 24
Thursday | Early Bird Hikes begin again in earnest. Start your day with an hour or so of birding at Celery Bog. Meet at the gravel parking lot at 8 a.m. |
| April 2
Saturday | Explore Clegg Gardens. Meet at NICHES Clegg Gardens at 8:30 a.m. NICHES has redone the trails and is now working on the garden area in front. Enjoy the early spring plants and birds. |
| April 9
Saturday | Early Migrants at Celery Bog. There should still be migrating waterfowl mixed in with the early returning land migrants and nesters. Meet in the gravel parking area at 7:30 a.m. |
| April 13
Wednesday | Audubon at the Overlook. 6:30-9:30 p.m. at the overlook at the end of the road at Prophetstown State Park. Come see what we can find around the overlook and visit with park visitors. |
| April 14
Thursday | Program: Birding Thailand, Rick & Debbie Read. See some of the amazing birds photographed during their trip to northern Thailand in Feb 2020. From Falconets to Liociclas, and Minivets to Sun-birds. This is just a sample of what might be seen on Indiana Audubon's trip to there Feb 7-18, 2023. |
| April 23
Saturday | Garden Expo is back. It again will be in the Hog Barn at the Tippecanoe Co. Fairgrounds. SAS and the West Central Native Plant Society will share 3 booths. Plant & garden related donations plus people to help are needed. Set up is Friday afternoon from 3 to 6. Drop off plants then or early Saturday. Sale hours are 9-3 followed by take down. To make donations earlier, contact Susan Ulrich (see p.11) |
| May 7
Saturday | Martell Forest Warm-up for Global Big Day. Bird skills a bit rusty? Come out and see how well you do at Purdue's Martell Forest. Meet at 7 a.m. at the main gate located at 1007 N 725 W, W. Lafayette, |
| May 11
Wednesday | Audubon at the Overlook. 7-9 p.m. at the overlook at the end of the road at Prophetstown State Park. Come see what we can find around the overlook and visit with park visitors |
| May 12
Thursday | Program: To be announced. 7:15 p.m. Live at Lilly or via zoom (contact Barny for invitation). Will include a chance to sign up for Saturday's Global Big Dayl. |
| May 14
Saturday | Global Big Day. The best time in Indiana to see the maximum number of bird species. Official counts in Tippecanoe and Warren County. Contact the compilers and get a territory to help all areas get covered. Record your data on eBird. See story on back page for further details. |
| May 21
Saturday | Mind BOGgling Event. A celebration of Celery Bog, our local nature park. See story on p 2. A few volunteers to help out are needed. A family friendly event with plenty of interest for everyone! |
| June 4
Saturday | Search for Breeding Grassland Birds at Prophetstown State Park. Many grassland species can be hard to find, but Prohetstown is a good place to find them. Meet at 7 a.m. at xxxxxxxx Will need to pay the entry fee or use a State Park Pass. |
| June 11
Saturday | Outdoor Explore. A chance to learn and try out a wide variety of outdoor activities. The various interests events are held in the Tippecanoe County Amphitheater & the Tippecanoe County Bicentennial Park. In the past, SAS's site has been at Bicentennial. If you would like to help at the booth please contact Susan Ulrich or Chuck Tuttle, (see page 11). |

Low-head Dam Removed

The Friends of Sugar Creek headquartered in Crawfordsville, accomplished their long-time #1 goal, by removing a low-head dam next to a defunct power plant last fall. It was a barrier to seasonal migration of aquatic life on the creek, as well as an impediment and danger for paddlers enjoying the creek.

This removal was among dozens that took place across the U.S. in 2021. Removing abandoned and derelict dams improves America's streams and rivers for wildlife, flood control, and human recreation and safety.

Elephants Die from Plastic

Around 20 elephants in Sri Lanka have died over the last eight years after eating plastic waste.¹ Examinations of the dead elephants showed their stomachs were clogged with food wrappers, polythene and other plastic items. Swallowing so much plastic seriously damaged the elephants' digestive tracts, and likely made it hard for the elephants to eat food or drink water.

Unfortunately, this is just one more example of wildlife dying because of plastic pollution.



On Mullion, an uninhabited island off the Cornish coast, thousands of small rubber bands were found lying around. Turns out they came from regurgitated pellets of Black-backed (above) and Herring Gulls (right).

The bands were swallowed by the gulls foraging for worms on the mainland where there are acres of flowers grown for the horticulture trade. The workers use the bands to tie bunches of cut flowers together. It is lucky for the gulls that they regurgitate the indigestible parts of their food, as the bands would otherwise enter their bowels and likely kill the birds.

Armadillos In Indiana?

YES. The first confirmed record was an individual found dead along I-64 in Gibson County in 2003. When John Whitaker published his *Mammals of Indiana* in 2010, confirmed reports had grown to 4 in 3 counties. Now they are up to 62 in 29 counties. Most are to the south, however, one is Porter County which is up along the lakeshore, well north of the SAS area. 2020 was a particularly active year for sightings (related to decreased human activity during the Covid lockdown?) .

Most of the armadillos appear to have come across from Illinois, but ones seen in the Evansville area are more likely from Kentucky.

To date, all sightings have been of individuals, most found dead on a roadway, only five of the 62 records are for live animals. As of yet there is no indication of breeding—all the individuals been adults. But keep an eye out. You might be the first to spot a Nine-banded Armadillo in your county or find the first baby/young animal for the state.

Armadillos are unique among living mammals in having ossified plates covered by a leathery epidermis. The Nine-banded Armadillo is the only species found in North America. There are 20 additional species of armadillo found in Central and South America.

EPA Rejects Yazoo Pumps

American Rivers reports the EPA announced its decision on Nov 17 to protect hundreds of thousands of acres of nationally-significant wetlands in the Mississippi River Delta from a huge agricultural drainage project .

This victory, years in the making, safeguards vital habitat along the Yazoo and Big Sunflower Rivers that supports over 450 species of birds, fish and wildlife,

American Rivers included the Sunflower River on its list of 10 of America's Most Endangered Rivers® six times between 1997 and 2020 because of damage the Yazoo Pumps project would cause.

The Pumps (which American Rivers described as a boondoggle) would not have protected communities from flooding. Instead, it would have drained ecologically-significant wetlands so a few large landowners could intensify agricultural production. With considerable public support, American Rivers consistently fought the project, and advocated for real flood protection solutions. They are still working hard to deliver real flood solutions

Rubber Bands Mistaken for Worms



How Warm is my Ocean?

Warmer than expected. A new study has found that the oceans have warmed so quickly that they will not cool down again. Oceans cover 70% of the globe and absorb 90% of the excess carbon. The ocean has reached a point of no return on heating leading to serious consequences.

Scientists analysed sea surface temperatures over the last 150 years, which have risen because of global heating. They found that extreme temperatures occurring just 2% of the time a century ago have occurred at least 50% of the time across the global ocean since 2014.

In some hotspots, extreme temperatures occur 90% of the time, severely affecting wildlife. More than 90% of the heat trapped by greenhouse gases is absorbed by the ocean, which plays a critical role in maintaining a stable climate.



Threat from Changing Atlantic Currents

The crucial system of currents in the Atlantic Ocean is at its weakest level in over a millennium, oceanographers warn. Since 1950 the system has lost about 15% of its strength.

Climate change is the likely reason. Consequences of the trend continuing would be sea rise on America's east coast, more heat waves and harsher winters in Europe, and less rainfall in Africa. A doomsday scenario would be the complete collapse of the *Atlantic meridional overturning circulation* which includes the Gulf Stream and other currents in the Atlantic, and the global changes that would ensue including changes to the fish and other denizens using the oceans, including oceanic and migrating birds.

The National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) forecasts even more alarming news for the coastal United States: Sea levels will rise another two to seven feet in less than 30 years — if we don't stop fossil fuel emissions.

Cross Purposes

Many Electric and gas utility companies are forcing customers to finance anti-environmental trade groups even if the customers violently disagree. Not only is this practice a disaster for the climate, but it also violates our First Amendment rights.

Current accounting systems allow utilities to charge customers for the costs of financing anti-environment trade groups. These groups litigate against pollution standards, train utility executives in combating clean energy policies, and work to undermine protections for wildlife and the environment.

In 2021 the Center for Biological Diversity filed a petition to ensure that shareholders, not customers, pay industry association dues. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is considering how it should change its rules to address the longstanding problem of customers' money bankrolling trade groups engaged in political activity.

You can contact the Commission if you'd like to put in your 2-cents—

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20426
United States
Toll-free Telephone: [866-208-3372](tel:866-208-3372)

Update on Wabash River Greenway

Thursday, March 3rd
West Lafayette Wellness Center, 1101 Kalberer Road
6:00-6:30 summary presentation
6:30-7:00 questions and comments

The final plan for Tippecanoe County's portion of the trail system is expected this spring.

Indiana Dunes Birding Festival Returns

May 12-15, 2022. — SAS is a sponsor

Register now for Indiana's Premier birding Festival. The Keynote Speaker is David Lindo, AKA the Urban Birder. His talk is **Urban Birding: A Gateway to Nature**. David is from Great Britain. One of his mantras is you can find birds everywhere. His goal is to engage city folk with nature. In 2018 his book **How to Be an Urban Birder** was published by Princeton Press. A number of his articles have appeared in **Bird Watcher's Digest**.



Other headliners are Elizabeth Hargrave, **Wingspan: how a card Game Took the Birding World by Storm**; Dan Gardoqui, **Talking with Birds: from Listing to Listening**; Diego Calderon **Birding with FARC: How Birds Connect People**; and Dr. Ken Brock, **Lake Michigan's Fall Funnel Affect and what You're Missing Out On**. Both carpool field trips and van guided trips will be back, along with popular events like outdoors Birds & Brew, the annual bird calling competition, and more.

Go to www.dunesbirdingfestival.com for details.

Nature Notes & News

● The day before Thanksgiving Rick and Debbie Read had a Purple Finch at their feeders in Monticello. Early winter it looked like a slow finch invasion year locally, but more were reported later in the season.

● Thanksgiving Day, a female Black Scoter was found by Fritz Davis at Celery Bog. The bird was loosely associating with a group of Ring-necked Ducks. Present in the same general area were two female Hooded Mergansers and a male Canvasback. Ruby, the reddish Eastern Screech-Owl, was hanging out in her hole.



Ruby by
Fritz Davis

● Michael Levine found the Black Scoter, about three hours after it was reported, hanging with a Redhead and the Canvasback, but no Ruby.

● On the 16 of December, Doug Wade reported a Peregrine Falcon at Bicentennial Park in Lafayette.

● On Dec. 27, Peter Dy-Liacco discovered a pair of Long-tailed Ducks at the Bog, a rare occurrence.



Long-tailed Duck

● Dec 28 there were reports of a Snowy Owl just south of Lafayette.. The bird stayed in the area for a number of days allowing people to get good pictures.

● Lisa School and Ed Hopkins reported 6 Tundra Swans at Bicentennial Park on Jan 3. The swans were there most of the day.

● Barny found 6 Cackling Geese that same morning sleeping on the ice at Celery Bog early in the day, along with White-fronted & Canada Geese.

● On Jan 6 Sam Hartzler reported a Ross's Goose was still present at the Tate and Lyle pond as of that morning.

● Next day Laura Jolley found 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglets at the Bog.

● On the 5th, Ed Hopkins found 13 Ring-billed Gulls at Bicentennial Park, and on the 9th John Skene saw 5 Herring Gulls.

● Susan Ulrich was out her yard Jan 15 & saw 3 raptors flying by in 3 - 4 minutes: first to fly by was an adult Bald Eagle, next came a Red-tailed Hawk and finally a Red-shouldered Hawk.

● Logan Orians found a Tundra Swan at the Bog on Jan 19.

● When the temperatures drop well below freezing and snow covers much of the farm fields in the county, it is time to go looking for Lapland Longspurs & Snow Buntings! Condi-



Lapland longspur
in winter Fritz Davis

tions cooperated in late January and people began reported longspur flocks on eBird. One report also mentioned Snow Buntings.

● Ed Hopkins hit the jackpot with an estimated 2500 Lapland Longspurs along Tippecanoe County Road 500 West, south of County Road 500 North in the early afternoon. Barny drove through about 4:30 pm on the 26th and saw two smaller flocks - one estimated at 125 birds and one perhaps twice that size- along with some Horned Larks. Barny Dunning described the longspur's distinctive behavior. "They swoop around in large groups, rising and falling in the area. Just as they seem to be settling down on the

ground, the whole flock launches back up & swoops around for a while longer. This flock behavior is a big give-away as to their ID."



Common
Redpoll

● Common Redpolls also started showing up late in the season. Some were mixed with a few Lapland Longspurs on W 200 S The longspurs straddled the border of the two fields there, one with corn stubble and one without. The redpolls were in the patch of taller grass at the base of a utility pole.

● Feb 6 Barny Dunning emailed that several people on the **birding on the fly list** were reported flocks of Snow Buntings in the area. Most flocks had about 20 birds, but there was at least one report of 60. One good site was the Purdue Beef Unit Farm on the county road labeled "Purdue ASRC. When he checked he found a flock of 20-25 birds feeding on the spilled silage just south of the tall silos The same spilled food was also attracting Starlings and Horned Larks. The buntings were nervous - they would fly away quickly when starlings or vehicles arrived, but generally circled back to land and feed again.

● K. Rattay enjoyed seeing a beautiful pair of Bald Eagles soaring majestically along Klondike Road between 250 and Lindberg on Feb 8. She described them as "Simply Gorgeous".

● More unusual was a White-winged Crossbill coming to a feeder at a private home in W Lafayette near the Purdue golf course on Western Drive. Several people photographed the bird on Monday but there were no later reports of its presence. Apparently the homeowner saw the bird first on Saturday. The initial report was on the Indiana Birdwatching page on Facebook. .

● Feb 12 a female Common Redpoll showed up late in the day at Susan Ulrich's sunflower feeder in

Is Bamboo Sustainable?

From an Article by Nathan Donley, of the *Center for Biological Diversity*

Like many things, there is no simple answer. From a resource-production standpoint, bamboo is in the same group as hemp, rising above more unsustainable alternatives like plastic, wood or cotton. Bamboo is strong and versatile and can be used to make just about anything from floors and countertops to diapers, toilet paper, tampons and clothes.

But the tale gets a bit more complicated when you look at how commercial bamboo is grown and what happens after harvest. While bamboo will grow out of a crack in a sidewalk if you let it, it's more cost effective to grow it in vast monocultures. Despite there being over 1,000 species of bamboo, one reigns supreme for profitable cultivation: moso bamboo (*Phyllostachys pubescens*). Bamboo doesn't need fertilizer or irrigation but these are sometimes added to increase the bulk or number of stalks. Pesticides may also be used to get rid of unwanted vegetation and stimulate stalk growth. In other words, production can be highly sustainable but not if biodiverse land is clearcut or profits raised by the use of chemicals.

So bamboo production can run the gamut from highly sustainable to "give me a break" as you go from responsibly harvesting in established groves to clearcutting biodiverse land to plant one species and maximizing output with use of damaging chemicals. As demand grows, the latter typically becomes the main production method.

After harvest, bamboo can be lightly processed to make things like salad spoons, chopsticks, toothbrush handles or cutting boards or highly processed to make things like clothing. Processing bamboo into something that's soft and comfy takes a lot of treatment, with really nasty chemicals that harm the environment and nearby communities.

Whether bamboo is the more sustainable choice will depend on the situation. First look for any certification or assurance that the bamboo was harvested sustainably. Then, if the product you want to purchase is something you need, not something you can easily buy used, or is not available in recycled content, then often bamboo or hemp will be better than similar products made from plastic, cotton or wood. That may change as demand for bamboo grows.

Warren County. It was a one-&-done view. Purple Finch were present most of the winter, varying from 6 to 12 birds. A single immature male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker also stayed.

- Mick and Sally Weeks had a one-&-done Common Redpoll at their feeders in Fountain County around the same time. They too, had a sapsucker and enjoyed seeing all 7 species of woodpeckers for most of the winter. They reported an unusually large group of 15 Common Flickers also showed up.

- There were a number of Redpoll reports for Indiana – including a flock of 35 or so in Indianapolis found by Aidan Rominger (a Purdue Wildlife student). Barny heard a Red-breasted Nuthatch calling on the southern part of the Purdue campus in mid-February and others reported them at their feeders. So there was a late finch + invasion.

- The strong winds of Feb 16 along with the change in weather resulted in a lot of bird movement. Barny Dunning had two small flocks of Greater White-fronted Geese flying over the southern part of the Purdue campus, a total of about 55 birds. A number of people began reporting Turkey Vultures in early-

to-mid February— Barny had his first vulture sighting of the year along the southern edge of the Purdue campus the same day as the geese.

- Karen Griggs enjoyed having a Fox Sparrow show up in her yard in West Lafayette on Feb 18.

- Common Redpolls continued in the area. A sizeable flock were seen feeding in trees outside of Beering Hall. They were still feeding there, near the main entrance by the big fountain, on the 18. Barny reported there were up to 24 birds at 2:20 that afternoon.

- That same day Michael Levine was driving on US 20 near LaGrange and spotted two flocks of Sandhill Cranes flying towards Lansing, MI. He also saw his first Red-winged Blackbirds in Elkhart.

- Sandhill Crane reports came in from all over in

mid-February as large numbers headed north. Geese were also on the move with flocks of Snow and White-fronted reported.

- Late on the 22nd of Feb Nick Harby took a walk at Prophetstown State Park. He saw 2 Bald Eagles sitting by their huge nest visible from the end of trail 3, plus a third eagle elsewhere. On his return to the boardwalk area there were a lot of Red-winged Blackbirds making their presence known both noisily and visibly.



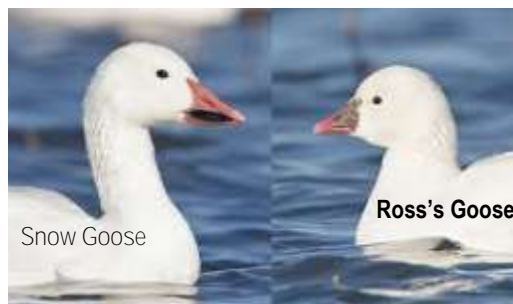
Snow Buntings & a Lapland Longspur

Christmas Count Comments

Two good Christmas Bird Counts produced a total of 86 bird species seen, plus 1 hybrid, & 11 species only seen during count week (cw). Overall 71 species (plus nine seen count week & one hybrid duck) were found on the Lafayette Count and 76 species (with three seen count week) on the Willow Slough-Iroquois Count (WS-I). The WS-I count was well above its average. Lafayette was average to a little low. Overall 97 species plus the hybrid duck are on this year's listing.

Twenty people in 14 parties helped on the Lafayette count. They were the compiler Ed Hopkins; Kevin Arvin; Mike Brattain; Barbara Brown, Fritz Davis; Barny Dunning; Roxie Easter, Jill Evans; David Hovde; Amruta Imamdar; Amy Krzton-Presson; John Skene; Eric, Karl, Larry & Becky Theller; Ellen Tobias; Chuck Tuttle; Susan Ulrich, Chris Wiles.

The Willow Slough count had 11 participants in 6 parties. The compiler Ed Hopkins; Leon & Phillip Borkholder; John Cassady; Jed Hertz; David & Lars Hovde; Bronson & Gary Ratcliffe; Susan Ulrich; and Lynn Vernon.



Bonanza of Birds

This may be the first year that WS-I had a longer list of birds seen count day than Lafayette, even though Lafayette had over 3 times the individual birds seen. One reason is that water at WS-I was not frozen over. That count is held 2 weeks after Lafayette's and waterfowl have often left the area.

This was only the second time for a Ross's Goose to be found. Other interesting sightings included a swan trifecta at WS-I along with 5 different species of goose. Both counts produced 4 Short-eared Owls and exactly 1 Red-headed Woodpecker. Redhead, Pied-billed Grebe, Turkey Vulture, Wilson's Snipe, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Fox Sparrow and Eastern Towhee, were only seen on the Lafayette count, while

Area Christmas Bird Counts 2020

Species Name:	Laf	WS-I	Species Name:	Laf	WS-I
Greater White-fronted Goose	cow	561	Red-headed Woodpecker	1	1
Snow Goose	0	163	Red-bellied Woodpecker	74	28
Ross's Goose	0	1	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	1
Cackling Goose	1	2	Downy Woodpecker	70	32
Canada Goose	1140	361	Hairy Woodpecker	14	5
Mute Swan	0	5	Northern Flicker	26	11
Trumpeter Swan	0	2	Pileated Woodpecker	33	3
Tundra Swan	0	1	American Kestrel	13	12
Gadwall	34	2	Merlin	0	cow
Black Duck	4	2	Peregrine Falcon	cow	1
Mallard	739	184	Blue Jay	120	61
Hybrid Mallard/black	1	0	American Crow	197	139
Shoveler	58	2	Horned Lark	9	24
Northern Pintail	2	1	Carolina Chickadee	114	0
Green-winged Teal	cow	0	Black-capped Chickadee	0	11
Canvasback	3	2	Tufted Titmouse	85	32
Redhead	3	0	Red-breasted Nuthatch	cow	0
Ring-necked Duck	95	0	White-breasted Nuthatch	97	21
Lesser Scaup	3	2	Brown Creeper	14	4
Bufflehead	cow	0	Winter Wren	0	1
Ruddy Duck	cow	0	Carolina Wren	21	3
Northern Bobwhite	0	2	Golden-crowned Kinglet	16	14
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	14	Eastern Bluebird	37	18
Wild Turkey	17	29	American Robin	573	29
Pied-billed Grebe	1	0	European Starling	5363	582
Double-crested Cormorant	2	0	Cedar Waxwing	cow	3
Great Blue Heron	44	3	Yellow-rumped Warbler	2	0
Turkey Vulture	1	0	Lapland Longspurs	0	11
Northern Harrier	6	17	American Tree Sparrow	165	205
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	1	Field Sparrow	cow	0
Cooper's Hawk	3	3	Fox Sparrow	7	0
Bald Eagle	32	6	Dark-eyed Junco	283	251
Red-shouldered Hawk	13	1	White-crowned Sparrow	6	2
Red-tailed Hawk	40	29	White-throated Sparrow	37	9
Rough-legged Hawk	2	21	Song Sparrow	65	11
American Coot	2	0	Swamp Sparrow	10	5
Sandhill Crane	5	55	Eastern Towhee	2	0
Killdeer	cow	0	Northern Cardinal	124	52
Wilson's Snipe	1	0	Red-winged Blackbird	15	63
Ring-billed Gull	14	3	Western Meadowlark	0	cow
Rock Pigeon	346	50	Eastern Meadowlark	0	17
Eurasian Collared Dove	0	5	Rusty Blackbird	0	6
Mourning Dove	489	29	Common Grackle	1	2
Eastern Screech-Owl	1	4	Brown-headed Cowbird	600	140
Great Horned Owl	2	4	House Finch	192	37
Barred Owl	0	2	Purple Finch	1	4
Long-eared Owl	cow	0	American Goldfinch	105	201
Short-eared Owl	4	4	House Sparrow	476	41
Northern Saw-whet Owl	0	cow			
Belted Kingfisher	8	1	Total Individuals	12098	3667
			Total Species	71	76

the Willow Slough-Iroquois Preserves CBC had Greater White-fronted Goose, Snow Goose, Ross's Goose, Mute, Trumpeter and Tundra Swans, Bobwhite, Eurasian Collared Dove, Barred Owl, Winter Wren, Eastern Meadowlark and Rusty Blackbird which were not seen on the Lafayette count.



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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*.

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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.

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Tidbits

- ◆ The Trumpeter Swan is the largest swan in the world.
- ◆ It is also the heaviest species of bird in North America, reaching 25 pounds.
- ◆ 55% of forest dryness is a direct result of human caused climate change.
- ◆ 80% of Madagascar's species of flora & fauna are found nowhere else on earth.
- ◆ 8% of human DNA comes from viruses.
- ◆ students in England recently discovered plastic pellets inside seagulls' eggs.
- ◆ 10 billion tons of concrete are currently used each year. If it was all made into cinderblocks it would reach to the moon and back multiple times.
- ◆ The Willow Ptarmigan's scientific name is *Lagopus lagopus* or "rabbit footed" in Greek. Toes of the ptarmigan have dense covering of stiff feathers which serve as snowshoes and resemble a rabbit's foot.
- ◆ The spring ephemeral, Squirrel Corn, is named for the small yellow corms from which it grows.
- ◆ A United Kingdom Study found that the average child there spends less time outdoors than the average prisoner.
- ◆ Every two minutes people around the globe take more photos than were taken in the entire 19th century.

Lynx Homerange Target of a Copper Mine

Best known for their tufted ears, Canada Lynxes used to be abundant in Minnesota. Now as few as 50 remain. A medium sized cat, the lynx weighs between 18 and 24 pounds.

These beautiful cats continue to be trapped, and now, federal officials in charge of protecting them, have pushed lynxes closer to the brink by allowing a 528-acre open-pit mine to destroy the heart of lynx homeland in Minnesota. Open-pit copper mining is not allowed in the Superior National Forest of northeastern Minnesota. But rather than reject the proposed copper mine and protect the public land, the Forest Service agreed to **trade away that publicly owned land so the mine could proceed.**



Pawprints of Canada lynxes have been found on the mine site, so it is clear destroying this forest would push these cats closer to the brink in Minnesota. Lynx live in dense forests where their main prey item, the snowshoe hare is found. This project would essentially destroy nearly 4,000 acres of forest and wetlands, home to lynxes and other wildlife — like northern long-eared bats, a threatened species— with open-pit mines, waste-rock stockpiles and mining infrastructure.

Most of this destruction would essentially be permanent

The ESA requires federal agencies to protect habitat for threatened and endangered species. Although the Canada Lynx is not endangered federally, it is in Minnesota — and that is why the Center of Biological Diversity is taking the National Forest to court to answer questions and defend their actions.



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

Its Time for Global Big Day !



The second Saturday in May has traditionally been the day more bird species can be found in Indiana than any other day of the year. Taking advantage of that was the **Big Day in May Count**, now morphed into **Global Big Day**.

Right now there is still snow on the ground in spots, but it won't be long until May 14th arrives along with the many warblers, flycatchers, vireos, grassland, forest, and wetland species of birds along with the opportunity to help with this global bird census. Seven are on this page—a bot of practice or warm up.



SAS officially holds counts in Tippecanoe and Warren Counties. However birds can be tallied in any of the 92 counties or even over state lines (or if you happen to be overseas, there too). What and wherever you are, we'd appreciate hearing from you about the birds you see. And of course, post the data on eBird so it can be included in the worldwide data.



Barney Dunning is the compiler for Tippecanoe County. Please contact Barney to let him know what areas you plan to cover. He may ask you to help with some uncovered areas or visit popular sites at a different time to get a better census of our local birds. There is no compilation party. His phone and email are on p. 11



Warren County's compiler is Susan Ulrich. Much of the county doesn't get any coverage so she would appreciate anyone who would like to see what they can find out there even for an hour or two. Contact her to let her know and she can suggest some good birding sites otherwise missed. Her phone and email are on p. 11. You can even do both counties.

