

Newsletter for the Indiana Audubon Society **CARDINAL**

February 2016 | USPS 129-810 Vol. 46, No. 1 | ISSN 0162-8186

UPCOMING EVENTS

Indiana Dunes Birding Festival
Indiana Dunes Visitor Center
Chesterton, IN
May 5th - 8th, 2016

Get more info at indianaaudubon.org or
www.indunesbirdingfestival.com

facebook.com/IndianaAudubonSociety

IN THIS ISSUE...

MEET A MEMBER
RICK READ

(PAGE 2)

FROM THE FIELD
BIRDING WITH SASS

(PAGE 3)

PROGRESS UPDATE
MARY GRAY UPGRADES

(PAGE 4)

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT

(PAGE 5)



Green-tailed Towhee • Jeff Timmons

INDIANA



BIRDING FESTIVAL

MAY 5th-8th
2016
INDIANA DUNES

For more information
visit us on the web at:
www.INDunesBirdingFestival.com
facebook.com/indunesbirdingfestival

Hosted by:
 **INDIANA AUDUBON**
SOCIETY, INC. FOUNDED 1898
Sponsored by:
 **DNR**
INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES
 *Indiana Dunes*
Nature's Masterpiece
 **NIBSA**
 **TROPICAL
BIRDING
STARIN**

Meet an IAS Member

(Editor's note: Please welcome our newest recurring segment, Meet a Member. We'll highlight a unique IAS member each issue and the great diversity of society members. To nominate a member for a future article, please email Brad Bumgardner at bbumgardner@dnr.in.gov).

By Brad Bumgardner



The Birdman of White County: Meet Rick Read!

Rick Read is our most recent Meet a Member. Rick, and his wife, Debbie, have been birders in Indiana for over fifteen years. Like Rick, IAS members are found in all ends of the state. Whether near a birding hot spot or in the middle of nowhere, our members find the benefits of being an IAS member in a diversity of ways.

How long have you been birding? A little about yourself, clubs you belong to, other hobbies, etc...?

My mom liked to put up feeders and keep a simple field guide and binoculars handy. I got more into birds as a Boy Scout when I earned my Nature merit badge. Afterward I enjoyed trying to identify birds wherever I lived or traveled. I'm a graduate of West Point, so I moved around a lot while I was active Army. Then I was moved several more times as a 30-year employee of Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co in engineering and sales.

My background did not include anything that helped me with wildlife, nature and conservation. I didn't understand habitat, migration and bird vocalizations until I moved to Indiana in 2000 and joined the Sycamore Audubon Society in West Lafayette. That's when my learning curve greatly accelerated. Now, I am Treasurer of our Audubon chapter. I started a Junior Nature Club after-school program for all our Monticello elementary schools. I have taken up photography again, concentrating on birds, so I give presentations at various venues. I lead bird walks and participate in bird counts. I have become the "birdman" in our community. My wife has joined me in my birding hobby, so we are able to enjoy the same activity together.

What are your favorite birding places to visit in Indiana?

Unfortunately White County has 93% acreage in agriculture and what habitat exists is almost all privately owned. Some of the best birding I've found locally is at the Indiana Beach Campground, with sizable acreage and a nice variety of habitats. But, it is closed much of the year and requires a fee or a special pass. Celery Bog in West Lafayette, although 45 minutes away, becomes my favorite spot.

Do you have a nemesis bird species? Favorite bird species?

Early on, I stopped trying to chase rarities or to get every species within a certain boundary. I would rather go to where those birds are numerous. Consequently, I don't have a nemesis bird. It's impossible to pick a favorite bird species but I loved seeing the White-tailed Tropicbird in Puerto Rico and the Turquoise-browed Motmot in Costa Rica. The Green Jay was really cool along the Rio Grande, and the Malachite Kingfisher in southern Africa was spectacular.

You've recently been doing some bird travel. Where have you visited out of state and what locales have been your favorites?

Domestic birding trips have been to Alaska, the Rio Grande River Valley, Sierra Vista and Magee Marsh. International trips have been to San Blas Mexico, Costa Rica and southern Africa. We loved Costa Rica, and the African Birding Safari was very special. I love any place where I see new and exciting birds, but it's hard to beat spring warbler migration at Magee Marsh.

What's your favorite part of being an IAS member?

It has to be the birding trips. My wife and I joined an IAS trip to Puerto Rico 3 years ago. It was our first trial birding vacation. We loved it and have been taking birding trips ever since, going farther and longer and enjoying every minute!

Birding with Sass

Greetings and the North Liberty CBC

By Steve Sass



Last fall, when my friend and Cardinal editor John Lindsey approached me about writing a regular column for *The Cardinal*, my initial reaction was “why me?” Granted, I do really enjoy birds and birding, but I don’t have a reputation of being super technical. Fall warblers give me a headache, every spring I have to re-learn all of the songs, I’m not convinced that Thayer’s Gulls even exist, and I want to see the DNA evidence that proves Cackling Geese are nothing more than Canada Geese with stunted growth. In any regard, friends we are, and I told John that I would of course love to write a regularly featured column for *The Cardinal*, but I didn’t really have a clue what to write about? About this time, John’s wife Karen recalled a statement that I had made to her a year or more ago in which I implied that to me, the birding adventure is as much about the people as it is the birds, and thus, my story begins: *Birding with Sass*. Considering that I’ve spent my whole life shunning my surname, why use it in a column? The only reason that I can give is because while pondering a column name, two people within one week commented that my last name was cool: one a dear friend, the other a supermarket checkout clerk, so I decided that maybe it wasn’t so bad after all.

My most recent bout with insanity began about a year ago when I entertained the notion that Northern Indiana didn’t have enough Christmas Bird Count (CBC) Circles, and I happened to mention to a few people that there was an obvious, glaring 7.5 mile radius hole centered around North Liberty, IN and containing all of Potato Creek State Park, the Koontz Lake Nature Preserve and portions of the Kingsbury Fish and Wildlife Area. Everyone agreed, but the first opposition came when someone pointed out that there’s only so many weekends available for the count, and that there were already so many other counts to work around. Of course, I had already thought about this, and my reply was that the North Liberty Count would be held this year and every year hereafter on New Year’s Eve. After all, most birders don’t really have reputations as party animals, so the plan seemed like a good one.

I pitched the idea to the South Bend/Elkhart Audubon Society as well as on the Birding Indiana Facebook page and to the INBIRD list serve. My friend Amanda Smith created a wonderful promotional flier, and I was able to rustle up just under twenty experienced field counters; “not bad for a first year count” I thought. Over the next few weeks, I drew up maps, scouted the territory and began assigning teams to blocks.

The day of the count arrived, and although I had seriously considered starting owling at 3:00 AM, I came to the quick realization that heading out in the middle of the long, cold winter night is one of those things that is more easily accomplished in theory than it is in practice. Things changed however when I received a text message from Scott Namestnik at 6:29 AM that he had just gotten an “(expletive deleted) Short-eared Owl!” I thought, “Wow! What a way to kick off a new count circle! I should really get out of bed!”

As the day progressed, our ten intrepid teams set the bar by logging 8738 individuals of 69 species of birds. In addition to the Short-eared Owl, highlights of the count included a Northern Shrike, a Merlin, several Bald Eagles and more. The weather was decent, the field counters were enthusiastic, the fellowship was great, and following the count, several of us celebrated the day with pizza and libations at a local restaurant. If you’re a bird nerd like me, New Year’s Eve doesn’t get much better than being outdoors counting birds. Mark your calendars for December 31st 2016, and please join us for our new tradition. Maybe this year, I’ll even wake up earlier.

Mary Gray Upgrades

Indiana's Flagship Bird Sanctuary Gets Some TLC

By Carl Wilms



Brooks Hall

In order to prevent foundation settling at Brooks Hall, a drainage system has been installed that carries storm waters from the gutter system away from the foundation. A line was also installed at the back of the Maintenance Shed to drain gutters and surface waters. Close to 550 feet of drainage tile was installed.



Girl Scout Longhouse

The Girl Scouts of Fayette County resigned their lease to the property known as Delawana. While this event occurred over a decade ago, the buildings had received little attention. The roof of the longhouse (site of a cookout a few Spring Meetings ago) was in need of repair. Late this past summer, several ominously leaning black locust trees were professionally removed in anticipation of a new roof being installed. In November, a new metal roof was installed by Friendly Construction to preserve the building from future deterioration. While the building has not been regularly used in recent years, it is structurally sound and warranted preservation. The site will be marketed for scout troop and other group camping experiences in the future.



Perkins Shelter

Located at the north end of Malus Trail and the trail's flowering crab apple trees, the Perkins shelter has long been a refuge for bird watchers and hikers who encounter inclement weather. The shelter was in need of a new support post and roof. Dave and Carl Wilms jacked up the roof's southwest corner and replaced the post that had stopped serving its purpose. Michael Hall and Carl then removed the existing roof, replaced decking materials as warranted, and then installed a new metal roof which had been purchased by Friendly Construction at a significant discount.

Donors Supporting Operations at the Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary

It is with sincere appreciation that we acknowledge the generous support of the following friends of the Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary. The lovely property provides essential habitat for wildlife in Indiana. The property's maintenance and enhancement is entirely supported by donations. Thank-you!

Serin Anderson
Sue Arnold
Boy Scout Troop 77, Muncie, IN
Boy Scout Troop 174, Indianapolis, IN
Gary Breitenbach
Marilyn Campbell
Lee Casebere
Lee & Patricia Casebere
Tom Cooney & Martha Mullin
Robert Cooper Trust
Robert Cooper Audubon, Muncie, IN
William Cummings
Ronald & Jonita Shields

Fayette County Master Gardeners
Cookie Ferguson
Gregg & Abby Filter
Dana & Joy Florestano
Brad & Holly Hanauer
Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society
Indianapolis Hiking Club
Indianapolis Zoological Society
Ralph & Paula Jones
JUSTGIVE
Lambert Family Trust
Robert & Mary Ann Layman
Dawn & Ryan Slack

Mary Lines
J.D. & Barbara MacDougall
Paul Duane Macy
Sally Mahnken
Laura McIntosh
Charles Mills
Robert Pfeifer
Edwin & Cynthia Powers
Victor & Marjorie Riemenschneider
Ray Sayre
Robert & Margaret Schwarz

NAS Climate Change Report

IMPACT ON BIRD DIVERSITY

By Kim Ehn

The National Audubon Society recently released its "Audubon's Birds and Climate Change Report". It is a lengthy report divided into five parts, as well as six appendices. It examines the conservation status of North American birds, details strongholds of suitable climate, and considers 588 species. Of these, the report projects 314 species will lose 50% of their current ranges, 126 species will not seek any expansion in their range, and 188 species may have the potential to colonize new locations. It is important to note that this report represents science-based interpretations to help with planning, funding, awareness, and discussion.

While past changes in climate are known to have changed the geographic ranges of many plants and animals, future climate change is expected to cause bigger redistributions of species. The continuation of many NA birds will depend on their ability to colonize climatically suitable areas outside of their current ranges. The Report lists these biological responses as: 'track & move', 'suffer in place', and 'adapt in place'.

This report can be found at www.climate.audubon.org. It can be downloaded as a pdf or manipulated online.

The animated, interactive part is called, "Find a bird near you". Under the Mississippi Flyway, the Indiana section lists 49 species that they describe breeding (summer) and winter range changes for the years 2000, 2050, and 2080, and a paragraph that details more about the bird and issues that may affect them. For example, Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*) is projected to lose 100% of its summer range in the Canadian Territories of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba by 2080. While Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) has shown a recent recovery by spreading southward to the Great Lakes, the Audubon Climate Model projects it will lose 97% of its current breeding range. It is noted that this species may be adaptable to more suburban and urban districts.

As birders, we understand the importance of safeguarding critical habitat and the need to curb greenhouse gas emissions. We may also need to use individual species projections to increase our efforts to identify and protect important bird areas.

Work Weekends Scheduled at Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary

The following dates are selected for IAS members to participate in the care of the Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary (MGBS). The MGBS is the sole property of the IAS and consists of over 700 acres of trails, forest, and grasslands.

The Sanctuary Committee invites you to join in the care of this lovely property. There is a great deal to be done during all seasons. The exact missions for the work weekends will vary and be customized for those wanting to participate. It is quite possible that bird-banding activities will be taking place on many of these dates. And don't forget, there is a campground available.

If you are interested in fellowship with birders, and lending a hand in caring for this lovely and important habitat, give Carl Wilms a phone call (765-827-5109) or email (carl.wilms@indianaudubon.org). He will be thrilled to hear from you.

DATE: 2016	DAY	<i>COMMENTS - Italicized comments are scheduled events and do not coincide with work events.</i>
January 10	Sunday	
March 5	Saturday	
April 23	Saturday	<i>Hummingbirds returned to MGBS on Apr. 23, 2015. This is the weekend before the Spring gathering.</i>
May 29	Sunday	<i>Memorial Day Weekend</i>
July 17	Sunday	
August 6	Saturday	
September 24	Saturday	<i>This is the weekend prior to the Fall Festival, which will be held at MGBS. There is a great variety of work that can be this weekend.</i>
November 12	Saturday	
December 10	Saturday	<i>Traditional wood-splitting event to warm the residents.</i>