

KANE COUNTY AUDUBON

SUMMER 2007 NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL BIRDFEEDER

Welcome summer. As I write this, I am still waiting for the big influx of eye candy – the WARBLERS. We had a few during the Spring Bird Count, but not in the numbers that I had hoped for. I'm sure by the time you get this that will have changed. I love the spring migration and the enjoyment each day brings as I get into the field looking for new birds. Summer bring the nesting birds, and going out looking for birds on territory.

KCA will once again participate in the Birding Blitz throughout the county (if you are interested contact Roger – see summer activities) -we will be looking for nesting birds in our area. Our field trips this summer will be to Tri-county State Park, Hannaford Woods, and Jon Duerr Forest Preserve. These sites will bring us to marsh, field and river. We will also have the opportunity to go the Field Museum in Chicago and get a personal tour of the bird lab – in a restricted area of the museum. You will get to see 'up close and personal' specimens of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, Passenger Pigeon, and Carolina Parakeet (all extinct species).

Our website (www.kanecountyaudubon.org) continues to be a source of pride for our organization with its continued announcements of recent sightings, great bird photography, items of interest for nature enthusiasts, and links to many environmental sites– if you haven't been there, check it out.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the following new members to KCA:

Becky Lambert – Batavia

David & Marjorie Peck – Batavia

Susan Terronez – St. Charles

Derek Strom – Elgin

PROJECT PREDATORWATCH

An organization called Project PredatorWatch (sponsored by ABC – American Bird Conservancy) is seeking citizen-science input to investigate the impact of predators on wild animals in the United States and Canada. If you observe a predator-wildlife interaction simply visit ABC's website (www.abcbirds.org/cats) to access an easy-to-use online survey. Complete a new survey every time you witness a predator-wildlife interaction. Results of this project may be reported in scientific journals and other publications, and may help further identify future research needs. (source: Bird Calls, vol.11, No 1 March 2007)

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT – 2007 (Submitted by Chris Madsen)

Participants from 16 Kane County communities submitted 118 checklists totaling nearly 10,000 birds of more than 50 species. In the county, Montgomery's bird counters tallied the most birds – 4,459, Elgin submitted the most checklists (35), and St. Charles and Elgin tied for most species (28). As would be expected, the Canada Goose took top honors as most counted. You can view the complete Kane County results by pointing your internet browser to www.kanecountyaudubon.org/gbbc_2007.htm. To learn more about the Great Backyard Bird Count, visit www.birdsource.org.

Here are results from around Kane County (showing number of checklists from each town).

Elgin	35	St. Charles	28	Aurora	24
Elburn	15	Geneva	16	Batavia	10
Wayne	34	Gilberts	17	Hampshire	11
North Aurora	11	Dundee	9	So. Elgin	1

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Following are the dates, times and places for our upcoming activities. If there are any questions, please contact the trip leader or Bob Andrini. Make sure that you dress properly for the weather. **Summer meetings change to walks. We meet at the location of the walk at 6 PM** (many members will bring a supper and meet at 5:30 for some socialization and bird talk). **The Potluck in September will also start at 6 PM.**

June	2	Birdwalk	Nelson Lake, Dick Young Forest Preserve, Batavia	8 AM	Rhonda (630) 479-1384
	8-18	Bird Blitz	Throughout Kane County		Roger (847) 697-7484
	13	Birdwalk	James "Pate Philip State Park (formerly Tri-County SP), Bartlett	6 PM	Roger (847) 697-7484
July	7	Birdwalk	Nelson Lake, Dick Young Forest Preserve, Batavia	8 AM	Jane (847) 622-3216
	11	Birdwalk	Hannaford Woods Forest Preserve, Sugar Grove	6 PM	Bob (630) 584-8386
August	4	Birdwalk	Nelson Lake, Dick Young Forest Preserve, Batavia	8 AM	Rhonda (630) 479-1384
	8	Birdwalk	Jon J. Duerr Forest Preserve, South Elgin	6 PM	Jane (847) 622-3216
	18	Field Trip	Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago (depart from parking lot at Peck Farm Park, Geneva)	8 AM	Bob (630) 584-8386
September	1	Birdwalk	Nelson Lake, Dick Young Forest Preserve, Batavia	8 AM	Jane (847) 622-3216
	12	Meeting (Potluck Dinner)	Peck Farm Park, Geneva	6 PM	Bob (630) 584-8386

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

January 27 – Eagle Weekend at Starved Rock (Jane McMillan)

We had a full day of birding starting off at 8 AM and returning after dark that evening. The weather conditions were favorable for good birding even though a little strange. On the trip south we noticed a cloud bank so dense that it made the sun look like the moon. Very late in the afternoon on our way home the sun had dropped below the clouds and due to the low angle, turned everything pink. The results were quite spectacular. In between those two events we watched the raptor show, went to the lock and dam where we saw a few Bald Eagles, gulls and lots of Canada Geese (no Cacklers). After lunch at the lodge we went for a hike to hunt for the Pileated Woodpecker which we did find (thanks to Rhonda) right where it was supposed to be. We had stopped to watch a pair of Tufted Titmice and Winter Wren when Nancy noticed movement in the trees which was of course the Pileated. What a great find!! We saw about 23 species and had a great day.

February 10 – Gull Frolic (Nancy Schnaitman)

On a frigid but sunny Saturday morning, 10 adventurous KCA members set out for Winthrop Harbor and the promise of a great day of birding – they were not disappointed.

Held at the elegant Winthrop Harbor Yacht Clubhouse on the shore of Lake Michigan, birders were treated to a breakfast comprised of muffins, coffee, and fresh fruit. Gull Stew (no gulls were used in the recipe), vegetable stew, pizza, green salad, brownies and chocolate chip cookies were served for lunch.

Gull specialists were on hand to help birders identify various species of gulls, setting up their scopes along the edges of the wharf. In spite of temperatures that never got above 15 degrees, and a good stiff breeze which was a real character builder, many people braved the cold to observe the many species of gulls and ducks swimming in the harbor. When the cold became overwhelming, birders could go indoors and enjoy birding through the windows overlooking the harbor, or they could warm-up by the fireplace. In addition, Steve Bailey gave a lecture on Birds of Prey.

Some of the sightings at the harbor were: American Black Duck, Redhead, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, Common and Red-breasted Merganser and those special gulls: Thayer's, Iceland and Glaucous. While traveling home we also saw Red-tail Hawks and two beautiful Ring-necked Pheasants for a total of 20 birds for the day.

February 17 – Country Roads (Bob Andrini)

In spite of the snow of the previous day and the possibility of questionable roads, 12 KCA members took to the rural roads in search of the elusive winter visitors. The roads (at least most of them) were easily traveled, and did yield the birds that we were looking for. One especially bright spot was an area by a storage barn that was providing many birds with a morning meal. In the horde of hungry Horned Larks we had very good looks at a couple of Snow Buntings as well as Lapland Longspurs. For many of the participants these were life birds (just the way life birds should be seen – close and for an extended time period). Usually we have to search the roads and, if we get lucky, we find these birds, but when they were feeding about 20 feet away, we had time to study them – we even set up the spotting scopes for some terrific views. We did continue driving and saw many Horned Larks, but never again saw Buntings nor Longspurs – being a birder means being in the right place at the right time. We saw a total of 23 birds for the day.

March 24 - Shabbona Lake State Park (Chris Madsen)

Twenty enthusiastic birders outlasted a persistent fog to nab some nice species at the lake. Birds of note included Bonaparte's Gull, Common Loon, Red-breasted Merganser, Canvasback, Ruddy Duck, Lesser Scaup, and Hermit Thrush. After refueling on cheeseburgers and fries at Pokanoka's Cafe at the park, the group caravanned to view a private pond developed by environmental restoration specialists Pizzo & Associates north of DeKalb on Annie Glidden Road. There we got great close views of a surprisingly wide variety of waterfowl including Blue- and Green-winged Teal and Ring-necked Duck. (Thanks to Debbie and John for talking us into going.) After most of the group decided to call it a day seven hours after our departure, seven intrepid birders ventured on to Wilkinson/Renwick Marsh. There the group added Rusty Blackbird and Sandhill Crane. In all, 52 species were tallied for the day.

April 28 – Lippold Park (Rhonda Nelson)

The last Saturday in April was a good day for raptor watching. The group that met at Lippold Park were treated to a Cooper's Hawk, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, and FIVE Broad-winged Hawks.

We also saw a Solitary and Spotted Sandpiper, Green Heron, Blue-headed Vireo and Yellow-rumped and Nashville Warblers. Species total for the day was thirty-nine.

TRIP REVIEW

Looking over the check-list for all the trips and rambles combined, KCA has tallied over 130 species of birds. Some of these birds are pretty special: Pileated Woodpecker, Saw-whet Owl, Iceland Gull, Black-headed Gull, and Harlequin Duck. We continue to go to more places looking for not only birds, but also new places that members have never gone to. Come join us – for trips look in the newsletter, for rambles, contact Bob Andrini.

WHO STARTED ME IN BIRDING?

For the next couple of issues of our newsletter, we will include members' comments about who started them into birding. If you have not submitted an item, please send it to me. (Bob Andrini)

Julie Long – My father, who banded birds when he was young. He learned birds from his mother who led nature walks. He took us on 'warbler' walks when we were kids.

Cheryl Hayes – Margaret Mechtenberg led walks at McGraw which I attended – Her enthusiasm hooked me into birding.

Margaret Mechtenberg – Ted Dillon from McGraw's – conducted weekly bird censuses on the property with KCA volunteers.

Jean Bonham – Dr. Terry Balding, University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire – I took an ornithology class from him and as part of course work I had to memorize bird songs, couldn't believe how much more aware I became of birds when hiking after that!

Pat Milroy – My mom. She loved to go on a walk in the forest and sit on a log to watch the birds.

Sandy Bauer – Listening to Bob and Kathy Andrini discussing birds during days when we all taught forest ecology classes for the St. Charles Park District.

Paul Mayer – Joel Dovinski, P.S. 71, Bronx NY – 1955 – Encouraged by my uncle Peter – a REAL birder.

Sue Wagoner – My dad loved birds and taught me about the birds in the area as I was growing up in Downers Grove. My first exciting 'find' though was not a bird but a Baltimore Oriole's nest in the neighborhood. I ran home to tell my dad about it. I would also list the birds I saw every week in a little neighborhood newspaper I 'published'. In those days we would also get excited about flocks of Canada Geese flying overhead – seen only during migration at that time.

Debbie Kern – Though a backyard birder previously, Mike Kershmann's birding class launched me beyond my backyard.

John Taylor – A friend started me as a kid and Mike Kirshmann's class as an adult.

Vern Mackay – Ann Haverstock made birding fun.

D. Zimmerman – E. Bentley gave me my first birder book and birding sessions. I called her at work one day and said I had an Oregon Junco in the backyard. She very kindly said it most likely was a Dark-eyed Junco. I held to my story. She came over later that evening and I showed her the picture of the Oregon Junco in the Peterson Guide – YEP! She agreed that the brown junco was from Oregon! That first year, I also saw in my backyard a Tanager, and a Woodcock! I had a great teacher.

Elaine Bentley - It was a Droll Yankee that introduced me to birding. I found a feeder in a dollar box at a Halsted Street fair in Chicago. When I put it up in Andersonville where I lived, I was fascinated with the birds that came. Within a week I was camping at Peninsula State Park and went on a walk with a park naturalist, Ellen, who found 48 species lurking about that morning. I was hooked!!!

Chuck Peterson – Dick Buerkle, former St. Charles Park Director – introduced bird watching and camping all on one trip.

Rhonda Nelson – Paul Bergeson through his patience answering my questions and bringing me to my first Audubon meeting.

Chuck Zimmerman – After retirement Roger Hotham and I spent many hours in different forest preserves. We still take occasional field trips.

Ginny Widrick – My mother, in Wisconsin, when I was very young – we had to identify each bird and call it by name rather than yell "there's a birdie".