



nature notes

Journal of Webster Groves Nature Study Society

May 1998 Vol. 70, No. 5

International Migratory Bird Celebration Activities

Saturday, May 2

Birding at the Arboretum—8:00 AM
St. Louis Audubon & Webster Groves Nature Study Society: Meet at the gatehouse of Missouri Botanical Garden's Shaw Arboretum in Gray Summit. There is a fee of \$3 per person for those who are not members of the Garden or who are not in a party with a Garden member. The Arboretum offers varied habitats from prairie to mature upland woods and lower wet woodlands along the Meramec River. This will be the time to find warblers and other spring migrants. Bring binoculars and field guide. No reservation required; call Jim Malone, 536-1119, for information. Ages 10—adults welcome. Help provided for beginners.

Sunday, May 3

Birding in Kennedy Woods—8:00 AM
St. Louis Audubon & WGNSS
Kennedy Woods in Forest Park is one of the best places in the area to observe warblers and other spring migrants. New trails provided by the MO Conservation Dept. make this area more accessible to groups. Meet near the open woods behind the Art

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Put On Your Earmuffs

Father Jim Sullivan

Now that warmer weather is approaching, better keep your earmuffs handy—not to warm your ears, but to muffle the roar. This is the year of the periodical cicada in the St. Louis area, and in much of eastern Missouri.

By mid-May a strange hum will be heard in the woods. As the month progresses, it will rise in a steady crescendo to an intense, penetrating din. The racket will be constant throughout the daylight hours. It will continue beyond mid-June.

Actually, three calls will be heard simultaneously. We may distinguish the *shrill buzzing* from a *dying hum* (sounds like a distant, baying hound), and from an intermittent *shivering hiss*. Biologists have discovered that each of these calls belongs to a distinct species.

But it takes an expert to distinguish the
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Spring Dinner Thursday, May 7 Eden Commons

Mark your calendars for the WGNSS annual meeting and dinner on Thurs., May 7 at Eden Seminary's Eden Commons, at Lockwood and Bompart in Webster Groves, MO.

This year's speaker, Don Kurz of the Missouri Department of Conservation, will present "Wild Plants and Sites of Missouri." Don has written several books and will have his latest, *Wild Shrubs and Vines of Missouri* available.

- ☆ To help with the dinner contact Vicki Flier at 968-9166.
- ☆ Please make your check payable to: Webster Groves Nature Study Society.
- ☆ Send it with your name and address to:
- ☆ Vicki Flier, 18 Algonquin Wood, Glendale, MO 63122-2013
- ☆ 6:00 Social hour
- ☆ 7:00 Dinner
- ☆ 8:00 Speaker: author Don Kurz of MDC
- ☆ Cost: \$13 per person. ♪

Membership Renewals

Linda Virga

To renew your membership, please send a check for \$15 to:

Randy Korotev, Treasurer
800 Oakbrook Ln.
St. Louis 63132.

The board has decided that dues are delinquent on September 1. If we do not have your renewal *before* that date, our new membership directory will not be mailed to you nor will your name be listed. Renew now—we'd like to see your name there!

A renewal envelope will be included in our next issue, or you may renew at your earliest convenience. If you have an address change or correction, or if you are not receiving *Nature Notes* properly, please con-

tact me. Also, if you do not plan to renew, please send a card of call:

Linda Virga, Membership
9734 Antonia Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63123
phone: 544-3313. ♪

Put On Your Earmuffs cont.

species visually. To most of us they *all* look like extra large horse flies with red eyes and reddish markings. They are similar to the cicadas we see every year in late summer.

In 1972 I observed this brood in St. Louis, Jefferson, and Warren Counties, and as far south as Carter and Oregon Counties in Missouri. It was also widely observed in 1959 and 1985.

So why do all three species emerge in the same time frame every 13 years? One theory is that by emerging all at once, they reduce their chances of being eaten. A blue jay can only eat so much in a given period of time. If they appeared in smaller numbers every year, as our summer species do, predators would quickly learn to depend on it, and would end up consuming a much greater percentage of the population.

So what have they been doing these 13 long years? Are they the "Rip Van Winkles" of the insect world, sleeping so long that when they finally wake up the world no longer knows them? Actually they have been active the whole time as immature underground critters. They are "piercing and sucking" insects, and have been tapping into various plant roots to nourish their gradual development. Now they finally emerge to become winged adults and to reshuffle their genetic inheritances in a raucous round of reproduction.

The constant roar of these insects can be hard to take, and the sheer numbers of their plump bodies can be unsettling. Add to this that their large red eyes and fiery orange warpaint seem to mark them as bugs with an attitude. But the good news is they do not bite, and are not directly harmful to humans.

After mating, however, the females gouge a slit in a woody twig, and use it as a place to deposit their eggs. Beyond the oviposition site the twig will die. Brown twig endings will be evident over the emergence area by mid-summer. For most forest trees this will only be a slight inconvenience, and the light pruning involved may even constitute a stimulus to a healthy tree. But smaller trees, like those in orchards and those recently planted, may be seriously damaged by too many egg-laying females.

In any case, it is time to prepare for a special event of nature. Keep your earmuffs handy, and get ready to observe a spectacle

that you will neither see nor hear in this area for another 13 years.

Postscript: When I was 19 and studying creative writing in the seminary, I penned the following verse. The "ong" and "ee" sounds are imitative of the cicadas.

To a Periodical Cicada
O vibrant humming insect roaring long,
What other ears have heard your eerie
 song?
Where were you once, and where again
 will be?
What future lands will leave your home to
 see?
Will we meet again, though far along?
If so, what will have then become of
 me? ~

Audubon Scholarship Selection

Betty Kellerman

The Audubon Camp Scholarship Committee has selected Timothy Morrison, a chemistry and physics instructor at Parkway South High School, to be the recipient of the WGNSS scholarship to an Audubon Ecology Camp for the summer of 1998.

Mr. Morrison comes with an outstanding list of accomplishments. He is the coach of Parkway South's nationally recognized men's and women's Solar Bike Racing Teams, mentor to Greater St. Louis Science Fair winners, provides a chemistry demonstration booth for Special Olympics, presents science programs to students at elementary schools, and is the founder and coordinator of Envirocorp, a class developed for the Parkway-Maryville Summer Academy emphasizing environmental education and stewardship for the environment in working with Lone Elk Park. He is a member of a large number of professional organizations and is a frequent presenter for these groups. In addition, he has received recognition from his profession and

his peers by being awarded grants for Texas Instrument Lab Equipment and Nuclear Geiger Counter Equipment, being noted for excellence in teaching physics from both St. Louis University and the American Chemical Society, and receiving the honor of being chosen Parkway South Teacher of the Year.

Of his Envirocorp experience, Mr. Morrison says, "For all three summers, the class has centered in Lone Elk Park where students have constructed trails, built elk and bison handling corrals, performed water analysis, plant identification, and soil testing, along with other tasks selected by park management. Much of the time is also spent meeting the park's needs in an otherwise understaffed situation. At the same time we conduct field studies, we also provide many hours of service to the park."

In addition, he says, "I enjoy working with students and making science more real or more significant in their lives. I believe this experience may open up new ideas for me along with new thoughts and techniques. I instruct students on the values of using resources wisely and on conserving and preserving out natural resources for more than raw materials to be converted for self products. I think I can utilize my experiences from the Audubon Camp in Wyoming to enhance programs I already have in place and to adopt new insights from other professionals."

The committee is sure that Mr. Morrison will find his summer experience to be a richly rewarding one and, based upon his past record, one that he will certainly apply to good use. ~

I WANT MY bird tv

As Charlene Malone mentioned, Don & Lillian Stokes' "Birdwatch" is broadcast on Channel 9; Saturdays at 4! Be there! Aloha!

1998 Butterfly Counts

Bill Brandhorst

This will be the sixth year we have been doing butterfly counts in Missouri. There are 14 areas where these are now being done across the state. St. Louis has 5 of them. They are open to the public, but if you plan to attend please call the leader to let him know you plan on coming and find out from him any details such as bringing lunch and where and when to meet.

At each area there are 3 main counts a year; a 4th one is scheduled for the leaders in the less pleasant weather in April. The dates of these counts could vary so your phone check is important. The Saturday dates of the main counts are:

May 16

June 20

September 5

We now have 5 year counts at several places. We have found and are now expecting some variations in the count numbers from year to year. Monarch numbers appear to be down. The number of species has not varied much. Occasionally a new species is noticed.

While the main reason for doing the butterfly counts is to watch for change and, if present, to search for the cause, the count does get people into natural surroundings and the butterflies are beautiful. Seeing them where they live makes us want to preserve them and thus their habitat.

On a count, the members gather and set off on repeatable routes to make the count. Usually butterflies in a corridor 40 feet wide are the only ones counted. They should not be counted twice.

Children, old enough to swing a net—8 years is about the younger limit—thoroughly enjoy the count. Catching a butterfly brings it up close and does not harm it if handled carefully and released.

The people I have had counting with me I have found to be warm, friendly and in-

terested. Please check in with your coordinator if you plan to come. Here is a list of coordinators:

Busch Wildlife Area

Bill Brandhorst 314-965-7269

Cuivre River State Park

Bruce Schuette 314-528-7247

Powder Valley Nature Center

Doug Jackson 314-301-1500

Valley View Glade

Marshall Magner 314-961-4588

Victoria Glade

George Winkler 314-993-1652 ~

***Birds of the St. Louis Area—
Where and When to Find Them,
revised edition***

Randy Korotev

The Revised Edition of *Birds of the St. Louis Area—Where and When to Find Them* is now available.

The Revised Edition appears very similar to the original edition, and you will be hard pressed to find the differences in the first 182 pages, although there are, in fact, about 80 corrections in this part of the book. We have made only two changes in the Seasonal Occurrence Bar Graphs to correct errors in the first edition (try to find them!) We have not, however, changed the bar graphs or the Species Accounts chapter to reflect new bird records since the cutoff date for the first book, December 31, 1993. Instead, we have added a 10-page Appendix in which these records are discussed. Believe it or not, in the past 4 years, nine new bird species have been added to the St. Louis area list (you'll have to buy the book to find out what those are). The Appendix also contains a complete checklist of all the bird species that have been seen in the St. Louis area since 1940.

Because we have printed fewer copies this time, the retail price has increased to \$19.50. Copies will be available at the May

banquet for \$17.00. Copies may also be obtained by mail for \$20 (post paid) from: Paul Bauer, 4 Club Grounds, Florissant, MO 63033. Make checks payable to "WGNSS." ~

New Bird Checklist Also Available

Randy Korotev

The supply of WGNSS bird checklists prepared by Dick Anderson in 1990 is exhausted, so I've prepared a new checklist which is now available.

The new checklist differs in several respects from the old checklist. First, I've made the checklist a bit less confusing by not including those species that have only been seen on one occasion since 1940. Dick prepared his checklist before the publication of *Birds of the St. Louis Area—Where and When to Find Them* and wanted the checklist to be a complete record of all birds seen in the St. Louis area since 1940. The book now serves that function better than any checklist can. The checklist is used mostly for keeping a record of a day's observations, or perhaps a year list or yard list, so there's not much advantage to including exceedingly improbable species like Band-rumped Storm-Petrel. The new checklist, which is entitled "A Field Checklist of the Birds of the St. Louis Area" to reflect the change in emphasis, does include spaces for write-ins, however. Second, I've tried to make the new checklist more informative by indicating for every species whether it is common, uncommon, rare, or very rare. Common species, for example, are listed in bold typeface whereas the very rare species are listed in light italics.

Finally, the numbers are back, sort of. On the 1978 checklist, the species were numbered consecutively. Dick's preliminary version of the 1990 checklist also included numbers. When he sent a copy to

several of us for comment, I imprudently responded, "What good are these numbers? They take up room, they don't make it any easier to count the number of species I've checked, and they don't correspond to the 'official' species number of the checklist of the American Ornithologists' Union." Dick said, "You're right," and deleted the numbers. Actually, I was right but I was wrong. After the checklist was printed, two people who have led many field trips, Paul Bauer and Dick Coles, explained to me the advantage of the numbers. When a trip leader announces, "There's a Common Loon," it's convenient to be able to also say, "It's number 2 on the checklist" to help alleviate the card flipping and puzzled searching that ensues. Actually, on the new checklist Common Loon is designated "A2." The "A" indicates the first-listed group of birds (i.e., loons) and the "2" indicates the second-listed loon.

We will try to have the new checklists available for purchase at \$0.25 a piece at WGNSS events. Alternatively, you can obtain them by mail from me at these rates:

2 for	\$0.84
4 for	\$1.57
10 for	\$3.76
25 for	\$8.69

In addition, for you record keepers, I have prepared a tabular copy of the checklist on eight 8.5" x 11" sheets of paper (one sided) with 15 columns for indicating the date and number of birds seen. This version of the checklist can be photocopied and placed in a 3-ring binder.

Alternatively, I can supply the list on a 3.5" computer diskette (IBM format) in MS Word, MS Excel, and ASCII text format. Both of these version are available for \$2.00 each.

Make your check payable to "WGNSS," indicate what and how many you want, and send to: Randy Korotev, 800 Oakbrook Lane, St. Louis, MO 63132.

Coming soon: WGNSS butterfly checklist by Phillip E. Koenig ~

Thank You to Contributors

WGNSS thanks the following generous contributors:

In memory of Lilian Nagel

Pat McCormick

Forest Park Prairie/Savannah Project

Derick and Susan Driemeyer

Dora Gianoulakis

Thomas Hardy

Paul and Barbara Johnson

Clinton and Sallie Phillips

Judy Tisdale

Linda Virga

Members have now contributed \$400, bringing the total WGNSS contribution to \$650. It's still not too late. Make checks payable to "WGNSS Forest Park Savannah Project" and mail to: Randy Korotev, 800 Oakbrook Lane, St. Louis, MO 63132.

Last summer we finally convinced the Parks Department to stop mowing the grass in the areas we plan to convert to prairie. Even that small act has had a noticeable effect on the birds. In late March, five species of native sparrows could be found foraging on the ground in the unmowed areas. ~

New Visitors' Center at Riverlands

Bob Knickmeyer

In mid-February, 1998, my wife and I were at Riverlands Environmental Demonstration area across the Mississippi River from Alton, Illinois for a brief birding tour. As we were about to return home, we decided to look in on the new Riverlands visitors' center.

The building is quite impressive, with bright and cheery decor—even carpeting on the floors! Visitor, immediately upon entering, are greeted by a nattily mounted Trumpeter Swan specimen. In the reception

area one finds free brochures covering the demonstration area and the Melvin Price locks and dam. Off a hallway toward the river there are rooms for meetings and conferences, and a spacious and well-appointed office area for Corps of Engineer staff. One of the rooms at the rear of the building, with a large picture window facing the main lake (or slough) features tripod-mounted spotting scopes for the public to use in viewing waterfowl, waders, raptors, and other wildlife on the refuge.

There are even clean, modern restrooms—which fastidious visitors might prefer over the primitive facilities in the other public restroom on the same road farther toward the dam.

Another feature of the center—and the real impetus for writing this contribution—is a large bulletin board upon which visitor may post the names of species of bird or other wildlife they have seen there and which they deem to be unusual or of interest to others. The only problem with this is that some species we found listed there are just a bit *too* unusual. As an example, one person—observer's names are indicated—reported seeing a Wilson's Storm Petrel—probably actually a first winter Ring-billed or Herring Gull. There were a couple of other somewhat less questionable observations of species that might, conceivably, be found there, but which seemed more likely to be mis-identifications.

The seasoned birder is not likely to be motivated to begin a feverish search for some exotic species listed on the center's bulletin board, but newer birders could possibly be misled. Some skepticism, therefore, is justified when scanning the list of observations. The area's rangers should, perhaps, screen the listings to eliminate outlandish entries; but it's possible they don't want to offend visitors.

It is not my intention to give a negative impression of this new public accommoda-

tion. The new center is, indeed, a very nice facility, and we are grateful to the Corps of Engineers for having it built. We also continue to be very grateful to the Corps for providing the entire Riverlands complex.

For some, the new center can be a great place from which to watch the birds in civilized comfort in an season. Or one could just pop in to warm up during frigid weather, to cool off during hot, steamy days, or maybe to find welcome relief in the restroom!! ☺

March Birding In St. Louis Area

Rose Ann Bodman

On March 4, Jackie Chain had 2 Long-eared Owls on Sand Ridge Road and a flock of Turkeys in the woods below the refuge headquarters, Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge (MTNWR). The owls were seen by many birders in the next few days.

John Solodar found a single Bonaparte's Gull at Creve Coeur Lake on March 6. A Glaucous Gull with a flock of Ring-billed Gulls and a sprinkling of Herring Gulls was observed at Fisherman's Pond on the west side of Horseshoe Lake that day.

Pine Warblers have returned to Shaw Arboretum. First report was Feb. 28. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers have returned to the Arboretum, Tower Grove Park (TGP), and elsewhere. A single sighting of White-winged Crossbills was recorded at the Arboretum. Other returnees are Brown Creepers, Hermit Thrushes and Eastern Phoebes. Hundreds of White Pelicans have appeared along the Mississippi at Riverlands, on the Illinois River at MTNWR, where they are visible from the headquarters and the road to the pump as well as the flooded fields along that road.

Some 200 Lapland Longspurs were seen on Hwy. H, St. Charles County, on March 11 and 12. Both Rusty and Brewer's Blackbirds have been seen frequently in

small groups of 2 to 5 birds, but no large flocks have been reported.

On March 14 the Alton Pool was low at Lincoln Shields and about 1,000 White Pelicans were feeding and resting in the shallow water when the birders on the Saturday field trip arrived. Bald Eagles took advantage of the easy fishing and there were at least 20 in the trees at Riverlands and 4 at Horseshoe Lake. Connie Alwood, Kent Lannert and Jack Van Benthuyzen had a Glaucous Gull at Horseshoe.

Spring migrants began arriving after a week of rain. On March 21 Lesser Golden Plover were seen along Hayford and Huster Roads in St. Charles County. Blue-winged Teal and Tree Swallows were among the returning birds. Larry Wells discovered a Common Loon in almost perfect breeding plumage on Creve Coeur Lake, March 20. The Saturday field trip led by David Becher stopped at Creve Coeur Lake to see the loon on the 21st. Walking around the north end of the lake, the group first heard, then saw a Red-shouldered Hawk. Creve Coeur Park seems an unusual location for that species. Charlene Malone had seen an Oldsquaw at Riverlands a few days earlier, and on Sunday the 22nd she relocated it for several birders.

Dave Bruns had Pine Warblers at the Turkey Ridge Trailhead off Hwy. 109, Rockwoods Reservation on the 23rd. Barn Swallows and Eastern Phoebes were in good numbers at Busch Conservation Area (BCA) on the 24th. Ducks were moving in good numbers with Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked Ducks, Shovelers and Red-breasted Mergansers predominating. Bonaparte's gulls have been seen at Frank Holten State Park and Horseshoe Lake as well as Creve Coeur Lake and Riverlands.

Thursday birders on March 26 found Chipping Sparrows, Purple Martins as well as Red-breasted Nuthatches and Purple Finches at BCA.

Little Creve Coeur had at least 2 Vesper Sparrows when Dave Becher scouted for the field trip on March 28. Later they were seen by those on the trip. Others saw Vespers at Horseshoe Lake. One Golden Plover and a Lesser Yellowlegs were observed beyond the Little Creve Coeur ball-fields. Only a few Snipe were seen at Marais Temps Clair and at Riverlands an Oldsquaw in rather strange plumage caused much discussion. The flooded area filled with dead trees edging Lincoln Shields was alive with Tree Swallows. Jim and Charlene Malone and Tom Bormann found hundreds of Golden Plovers along Hayford Road, off Rte. B, St. Charles County. Before the Audubon field trip at Riverlands an American Bittern was flushed on Walker Island. There were flocks of Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Ducks and a few Red-heads, Red-breasted Mergansers and Bufflehead to sort through at Riverlands. A few Golden Plovers and Pectoral Sandpipers were on the distant mudflats near the dam. Jack Van Benthuyzen, Kent Lannert and Connie Alwood had a Peregrine Falcon as they crossed the Mississippi on the McKinley Bridge. At TGP there were Winter Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Hermit Thrushes.

On Sunday, March 29, Dave Becher found a Little Blue Heron at the Sauget Marshes. Cattle Egrets were reported near Big Duga's Truck Stop, Rte. 203. Two Short-eared Owls were reported by Larry Wells at Riverlands over the weekend.

On March 29, more than 200 Golden Plover were feeding along Hayford Rd. At MTNWR on the pump road, 3 Long-billed Dowitchers were resting and feeding. Two immature Bald Eagles were perched in trees near the boat launch on Swan Lake. Short-billed Dowitchers were also reported from the refuge. A Great Egret was seen near the Brussels Ferry Landing and another on Rte. 111 near Horseshoe Lake.

Late in the afternoon, the Gaddy Bird Garden at TGP was full of migrants. Both Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets, many Yellow-rumped Warblers, 8 Fox Sparrows, a single Field Sparrow, several Hermit Thrushes, 2 Eastern Phoebes, Brown Creepers and 2 very active pairs of sapsuckers clustered in the shrubs.

An Osprey, at Stump Lake above Pere Marquette State Park, was observed by Charlene Malone on the 30th.

Tom Bormann had a Parula Warbler and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher among the birds at TGP's bird garden on the 31st. Jim Ziebol and Lawrence Schreiber had a Bewick's Wren there. At BCA, Jack Van Benthuisen found a Louisiana Waterthrush, Solitary Sandpiper and Yellowlegs.

Randy Korotev has proof that the spring migration in the Kennedy Woods, Forest Park, is early this year in contrast to last year's late arrivals. He recorded 4 warbler species there before March ended. He saw a Pine Warbler on the 27th, a Black-and-White and 1 Yellow-rumped on the 28th and an extremely early Orange-crowned Warbler on March 29. Another early bird was a male Whip-poor-will which flushed in the woods on March 28.

Of interest was the Gray Catbird seen by Darlene Eyster on Litzinger Rd., in Brentwood on the early date of Feb. 27. ~

Tyson Nature Line

Call 935-8432 for a summary of the latest bird sightings in the St. Louis area. Please report any unusual birds to Jack Van Benthuisen, 961-3390 ~

Welcome to new members...

Jerry McLaughlin Webster Groves
Jerry & Susan Ondr Ballwin
Edna Alexander Alton, IL

1998 Shaw Arboretum Native Plant Conference June 5-7, 1998

The native plant conference will be held at Powder Valley Nature Center in St. Louis, Mo., June 5-7. Registration required: Shaw Arboretum, PO Box 38, Gray Summit MO 63039—314-451-3512 ~

Scudder Scholarship News

Marjorie Richardson

The Mickey Scudder Scholarship in field biology for 1998 has been awarded to Thomas Prinzie, a graduate student at Washington University and the Missouri Botanical Garden. Mr. Prinzie's proposal is entitled, "The Evolution of the Milkweed Corona: Systematics and Flower Development in Neotropical Milkweeds."

He will be doing his field work in the Texas and Mexico during this summer and in 1999. As Prinzie states in his proposal, "Field work is an essential component of this study, since it requires the collection of fresh flower material at different stages of development from bud to maturity."

The Mickey Scudder Scholarship Committee feels privileged to be able to help Mr. Prinzie in this pursuit. We wish for him a successful summer of collecting and look forward to hearing of the results.

The scholarship was established 1984 by the Webster Groves Nature Study Society and Mr. A. Scudder as a memorial to his wife and have been presented to a graduate student from Washington U., St. Louis U., U. Of MO at St. Louis, of Southern Ill., Edwardsville since 1985.

Funds for field work are often very difficult to obtain, so this scholarship money has been especially appreciated by all our recipients. Thank you to WGNSS and to Mr. Scudder from all of them. ~

Birders Needed

The Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge is looking for two dependable people with good birding skills to assist with assessing the status of breeding bird populations along the Mississippi River.

The birders must be able to identify birds by sight and sound, estimate distances of 25 and 50 meters, hike or boat into remote areas, and withstand the rigors of working in floodplain habitat. Stinging nettle and insects are common nuisances with which birders must contend.

Data will be collected on breeding birds and vegetation at approximately 150 random points between Rock Island, Illinois and St. Louis, Missouri. All birds will be identified on a single visit to each point beginning in early June. The work is expected to take six weeks to complete depending on weather and work conditions. The Refuge will provide maps of the points, data forms, pencils, clipboards, binoculars, bird identification books, a timer and watch, and a compass. The birders will provide appropriate footgear and clothing. Refuge staff will provide information and/or train birders in the survey techniques. The data will be used by biologists and managers to evaluate the status of breeding birds in the Mississippi River Corridor and to formulate actions required to improve the habitat to sustain these forest dwelling birds.

Each birder will be paid mileage and \$1,500 for collecting bird and vegetation data, entering the information in a data base, and preparing a report. If you are interested in participating in this important project, please contact:

Ross_Adams@mail.fws.gov

write to: Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge, 1704 North 24th Street, Quincy, Illinois 62301, or call 217-224-8580. ∞

International Migratory Bird Celebration Activities cont.

Museum. Bring binoculars and field guide. Help provided for beginners. No reservations required; call Jim Malone, 536-1119, for more information. Ages 10 and up and adults welcome.

Sunday, May 10: Forest Park

8:00 AM—St. Louis Audubon & WGNSS
This second visit to Kennedy Woods in Forest Park should be at about the peak of the spring migration. Bring binoculars and field guide. Help provided for beginners. No reservations required; call Jim Malone, 536-1119, for more information. Ages 10 and up and adults welcome.

Saturday, May 16

Migratory Bird Discovery Day at the Missouri Botanical Garden
10–5 PM St. Louis Zoo, St. Louis Audubon, & Wild Bird Rehabilitation
This year Migratory Bird Discovery Day will be held in conjunction with the St. Louis Earth Day Community Festival. Activities and demonstrations will feature bird identification, where to look for birds, and the do's and don't's of backyard bird feeding, among other topics. Come to the Ridgeway Center of the Missouri Botanical Garden. Shuttle bus service will be available from the main site of Earth Day exhibits in Tower Grove Park. Stop by at any time during the hours listed. Call Jim Holsen, 822-0410 for more information. ∞

Saturday, May 16: Birds of the Marsh

at Marais Temps Clair Conservation Area
8–10 AM sponsor: MO Conservation Dept.
Marais Temps Clair is a wetland area, a refuge for herons, bitterns, Soras, Marsh Wrens, and other wetland birds. Call Nancy Schneider at 441-4554 (Busch Conservation Area) to make reservations.

Saturday, May 16: Boone County

Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area
8 AM—St. Louis Audubon & WGNSS
This is a one-day field trip to the Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area along the north shore of the Missouri River in Boone County, southwest of Columbia. Eagle Bluffs is the largest wetland area in the country that uses treated municipal wastewater to supplement wetland water needs. Bring lunch, binoculars, and field guide. No reservations required; call Jim Malone, 536-1119, for location of meeting place and additional information.

Related Events

Saturday, April 25: Bird Release

2 PM, World Bird Sanctuary
The World Bird Sanctuary plans to release 2 Red-tailed Hawks and perhaps 1 mature male Bald Eagle at its Office of Wildlife Learning at Lone Elk County Park. Education programs will be held the same day at 11:00, 1:00 and 2:00, also in Lone Elk Park. Call Pat Gillett at 938-6193 for more information.

Friday, June 12: Riverlands

Dedication of Environmental Demonstration Area, US Army Corps of Engineers—10 AM kickoff
The Riverlands EDA at the Melvin Price Locks and Dam near Alton, Illinois, is a 1,200-acre tract of wetland prairie along the Mississippi River, a haven for the millions of ducks and shorebirds that use the Mississippi flyway. For more information, call Julie Ziino at 899-2600, ext. 231. ~

Introductory Study Of Birds

Biol 325 Washington University

On Thursday evenings (7-9:30 PM) next fall, Dr. Richard W. Coles will offer this class for the University College of Washington University. In addition to those enrolled for credit, there will be space for

auditors. These pay a reduced fee (\$340), are not vulnerable to exams, papers, grades, or other pedagogical torture. The class will meet in the Tyson classroom using the collection of specimens there.

The first 4-5 meetings will review of the orders of living birds and those families found in North America. Behavior, Natural History and relationships to man are discussed. Subsequent meetings will discuss the evolutionary history of birds and the process of evolution, especially as illustrated by avians. Anatomical structures will received attention in relation to flight feathers, flight, migration (navigation and orientation), special senses (non-visual light reception, magnetic sensitivity, infrasound perception) will be discussed. In early December, we will examine the plight of declining populations of neotropical migrant songbirds, and waterfowl.

While designed as an introductory science experience for undergraduates, this class addresses matters of interest to all students of nature and to birders in particular. It provides an opportunity to explore ornithology beyond issues of field identification, seasonal and geographic occurrences of species and other matters already well-supported in field guides and at gatherings of the flock. Birders need not be intimidated by the presence of students taking the course for credit. They, and the instructor, are human beings with the attendant foibles and deficiencies. Our purpose is to learn about birds as we enhance our appreciation of some of Mother Nature's most beautiful life forms.

For further information call Robert Massa at the University College (314-935-6727) or Richard Coles (314-938-5271). ~



American Birding Association Code of Birding Ethics

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

1a. Support the protection of important bird habitat.

1b. To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.

Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area.

Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

1c. Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance of the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

1d. Stay on roads, trails, paths where they exist; otherwise keep the habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law and the rights of others.

2a. Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.

2b. Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads in public areas, both at home and abroad.

2c. Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

3a. Keep dispensers, water, and food clean and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.

3b. Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.

3c. If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure that birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care. Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in items #1 and #2, has responsibility as a Group Member.

4a. Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1c. applies.

4b. If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it is prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours.]

4c. Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.

4d. Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment and does not interfere with others using the same area.

- 4e. Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.
- 4f. Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g., no tape recorders allowed).
- 4g. Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organization. ~

ABA: 800-850-2473; fx: 800-247-3329;
e-mail: member@aba.org



My dear, did you know?

Bound volumes of *Nature Notes* are archived in the Monsanto Research Library at the Missouri Botanical Garden. So here's your chance for immortality—submit an article today! We'd love to read your adventures with nature, reviews of books of nature lore, or editorial on current environmental issues.

Submissions—handwritten, typed, IBM or Mac to: Anne McCormack, 587 Andrews, St. Louis MO 63122. Computer wizards: It's safest to send a printout along with your disk. ~

Deadline: May 8 

Need directions?

Arboretum, Gray Summit

- Take 44 west to Gray Summit (100) exit, left over highway, right onto service road and immediately left into Arboretum.
- Meet at Brushy Creek trail head.

Busch Wildlife Area

- Take 40 west toward St. Charles Co., left on 94, right on D, follow signs
- Hampton Lake—usual meeting spot—first right.

Castlewood State Park

- Take Manchester west, south (left) on New Ballwin Rd., east (left) on Kiefer Creek Rd., follow signs. Meet at boat ramp.

Forest Park, Kennedy Forest

- Highway 40 to Hampton north, follow signs to St. Louis Zoo's Living World. Kennedy Forest is about 1/4 mi. West.

Riverlands Environmental Dem. Area

- From 1-270 in north St. Louis County, take Hwy. 367 north to Alton.
- Turn right into Riverlands at the Fisca service station, just before the approach to the Clark Bridge over the Mississippi River.

1997-8 WGNSS Board

President: Sue Gustafson, 9007 N. Swan Circle, St. Louis MO 63144, 968-8128.

1st Vice Pres: Doug Corbett, 702 C Overlook Cir. Dr., Manchester MO 63021, 861-2829.

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Webster Groves Nature Study Society



Meetings

Wednesday, May 6:

7:00-8:30 PM Board meeting at the Fliers—see address in next item. All members welcome.

Thursday, May 7:

WGNSS annual meeting and dinner. This year's speaker, Don Kurz of the MO Dept. of Conservation, will present "Wild Plants and Sites of Missouri."

- ☆ \$13 per person, payable to WGNSS
- ☆ Send to: Vicki Flier, 18 Algonquin Wood, Glendale, MO 63122-2013
- ☆ 6:00 Social hour; 7:00 Dinner

Botany

Beginners are welcome. Bring lunch, drink, insect repellent & weather gear.

Thursdays in April and May:

Field trips usually meet at 9:30 AM; trip is normally 3-5 hr. plus travel time. Led by Fr. James Sullivan. Call Catherine Filla, 481-5298, after 5 PM Wed. for location.

Entomology

Sunday, April 22:

7:00-9 PM at Magner's, 516 Bacon Ave., Webster Groves, 961-4588. 1998 is the year of the Periodical Cicada for Missouri. Hear Mike Arduser discuss the habits and life history of the 13-yr. cicada of our part of the state and its cousin of the northern counties.

Sunday, May 24:

7-9:00 PM at Magner's. Jane Walker will present "Beginning Dragonflies."

Sunday, June 28:

7-9:00 PM at Magner's. John Christensen will discuss "Insects of Deserts and Sand Dunes."

Birding

Open to all. For more information, call David Becher 576-1146. Bring lunch.

Thursdays in April:

8:30 AM meet at West County shopping center, south lower lot behind Penney's, lamp post #1.

Thursdays in May and June:

8:00 AM meet at West County.

Saturday, April 25:

7:30 AM Birding at Arboretum, Gray Summit. Entrance fee \$3. Day spent walking. Meet at entrance to Brush Creek Trail. Bring a lunch to carry.

May 2-16 Migratory Bird Celebration

See the events listed on p. 1 & 10.

Saturday, May 2:

7:30 AM West County. See above.

Saturday, May 2:

8:00 AM WGNSS/Aud. at Arboretum. See 4/25 above.

Saturday, May 9 Big Day!

Call your totals to Rose Ann Bodman, 961-2583.

Saturday, May 16

7:30 AM Castlewood State Park. Bring lunch. Meet near boat ramp.

Saturday, May 23

8:00 AM WGNSS/Audubon at Castlewood. See Prothonotary, Yellow-throated, and Cerulean Warblers, Fish Crows, & possibly Mississippi Kites & Red-shouldered Hawks. Call Jim Malone 314-536-1119 for further information.

Saturday, May 23

7:30 AM West County. No leader.

join WGNSS


Send \$15 yearly dues to Randy Korotev, 800 Oakbrook Ln., St. Louis MO 63132.

May 1998

Webster Groves Nature Study Society

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Membership:	Linda Virga, 9734 Antonia Dr., St. Louis MO 63123

The objectives of the society are: To stimulate interest in nature study on the part of adults and children; to cooperate with other organizations in nature study; to encourage amateur research in the natural sciences; to promote conservation of wildlife and natural beauty. Open to all with an interest in nature.

established in 1920