



nature notes

Journal of Webster Groves Nature Study Society

December 1998 Vol. 70, No. 10

A Tribute to Jack Van Benthuyzen

Connie Alwood

November 29, 1925 to October 9, 1998

The bell has tolled for WGNSS's dear friend Jack Van Benthuyzen. Unfortunately the hot-line with Terry or Martha's voice saying: "Jack Van has a Western Grebe at Horseshoe Lake," will no longer ring as it often has since Jack retired almost eight years ago. Most of us can recite Jack's many accomplishments by heart but let's review them. Since Jack was a teenager, he was a birder: first with the Boy Scouts, then on his own. He even managed to get his young bride, Nancy, to allow him to bird while on their honeymoon to Arizona and Mexico in 1950. They settled in Webster Groves raising three fine sons, Dan, John, and Bill.

Jack owned his own electrical contracting business, often working seventy-hour weeks. Nevertheless, he managed to sneak a few hours of birding into his busy schedule. He even served as President of the St. Louis Audubon Society. The Saturday Birding Group would often meet Jack in the field. He would give his report and move on. For a while I thought that he was aloof. Later I learned that he was just busy. In 1990 Jack retired and started to take Dick Anderson birding. When Dick told him that several of us were writing a book on St. Louis area birds, Jack asked to join us. He was instrumental in our effort to produce a good product. When he took on a task, whether it was writing Species Accounts or Birding Locations, he did so precisely and quickly.

When Jack and Dick invited me to join them on their birding trips, I was pleased for I could not be so lucky as to find better instructors or companions. I soon discovered that Jack had one purpose in life: to bird. He would often arrive to Carlyle Lake two or three times a week on the hopes of seeing a Smith's Longspur or a Red-necked Grebe. On returning from such a trip, Jack would tick off all the birds that we had seen for the day, not from a checklist either. He had the checklist memorized.

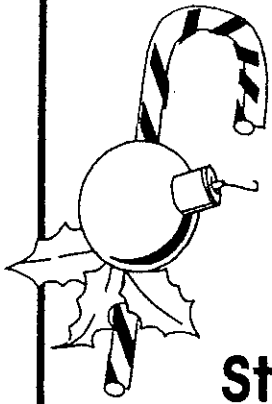
Jack was determined to break Ron Goetz's record of having seen 276 species of birds in a calendar year. Two years in a row he had 274 birds. But in 1996 Jack saw 290 birds. He followed that up in 1997 with 286 birds. He was convinced that it was possible to see 300 species of birds in a single year.

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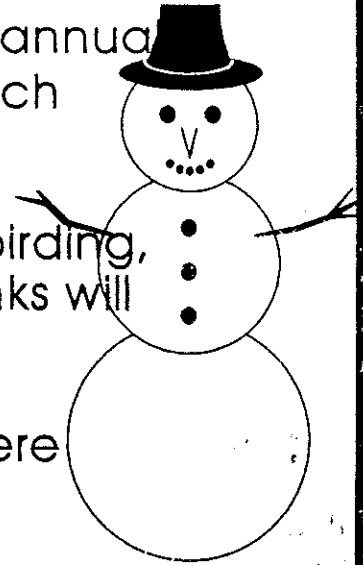
OPEN HOUSE DECEMBER 6, FROM 1-4 AT TYSON RESEARCH

You are invited to the **WGNSS** and
St. Louis Audubon Society's annual
Holiday Open House at Tyson Research
Facility **December 6, 1998.**

Bring a dish for an afternoon of birding,
hiking and meeting new friends. Drinks will
be provided.

Catch up on what was seen where
from **1-4 p.m.**

For more information call Vicki Flier - 968-9166



Christmas Counts

Saturday Dec. 19 Pere Marquette

Pere Marquette State Park in IL will hold its annual Christmas bird census on Dec. 19. Some areas will be preassigned, others please meet at Pere Marquette Lodge at 7:30 AM. We would appreciate hearing from all participants before the count day. There may be a dinner following the count—for tally and comfort at 5 PM at Peach Tree Restaurant in Brussels, if the ferry is running. Please contact Irene Mondhink (618-885-5233), or Helen Wuestenfeld (618-498-5335) for further details. There is a \$5 fee for participation.

Saturday Jan. 2 Orchard Farm

Randy Korotev

The Orchard Farm Christmas Bird Count will be held on Saturday, January 2. Old-timers and newcomers are invited to help count birds in St. Charles County. This year is the 99th anniversary of CBCs and the 58th year (I believe) that the Orchard Farm CBC has been run. Please contact me ahead of time for an area assignment. As usual, I will be enjoying birds, relatives, and the Packers (in that order) in northern Wisconsin much of the week preceding the count. If you contact me before Dec. 19, I should be able to get back to you right away. Otherwise, leave a message on my voice mail (935-5637) or our rude and less reliable home answering machine (993-005) and I'll get back to you a few days before

the count. A \$5/person fee is required by the National Audubon Society to help compile and print the results.

Sunday Jan. 3 Busch Wildlife Area

The annual Christmas bird census will be held on Jan. 3 at Busch in St. Charles Co. MO. Meet at headquarter's bait shop at 8:00 AM. Bring lunch. Call: Tom Parmeter 921-6017, home or 837-1360, work. Fee \$5. ~

Welcome to new members...

Lu Ann Hunter..... Creve Coeur
Jan Surbey..... High Ridge, MO
Paula Young.....Richmond Heights
Anne Mitchell..... Manchester
Rich & Jane Deschu..... Affton
Bill & Jody.....Imperial, MO

Summer Botanizing

Carl Darigo

With the exception of the annual weeklong outing, regular Botany Group trips continued during the summer, with the following in attendance one or more times, Father James Sullivan, Leonard Blake, Marvin Boisseau, Jeanne Clauson, Carl Darigo, Catherine Filla, Elaine Fortner, Karen Haller, Pat & Jack Harris, Dan Kassebaum, Andrea & Jim Kennedy, Betty & Bob Nellums, Tom O'Gorman, Dick Russell, Albert Seppi and Linda Virga.

June 4, Missouri Botanical Garden—steady rain plus lightning caused three people to abandon Castlewood State Park in favor of Missouri Botanical Garden's safer confines. In the Ridgway Building, the display of currently flowering plants included *Echinacea pallida* (pale purple coneflower) with the correct white pollen. Plants in eastern Missouri formerly using this name are now called *E. simulata*, due to the yellowish pollen. The Climatron has installed dinosaurs, dinosaur nests with big white eggs and accompanying sound effects. Normally the Climatron is hot and humid,

but seemed much cooler, which one member figured was to keep the dinosaur eggs cool. Unusual sightings were prayer plants in the Marantaceae family, whose leaf petioles have pulvini, or thickenings, which rotate the leaves like praying hands, a huge talipot palm (*Corypha umbraculifera*) from Ceylon and the showy flowers of white cat whiskers (*Orthosiphon stamineus*) from Malaysia. Also seen were the Panama hat palm tree (*Carludovica palmata*) and *Erythroxylum ovalifolium*, a close relative of cocaine. A Brookings Interpretive Center display featured the bullhorn acacia (*Acacia cornigera*) bush, with accompanying acacia ants who protect the plant from predators in exchange for living and feeding accommodations. In the Schoenberg Temperate House were large pitcher plants (*Sarracenia sp.*) while long rows of yellow flowering dwarf horse chestnut (*Aesculus parviflora*) bushes bordered an outside sidewalk, the latter a native of southeastern U. S.

June 18, Missouri Botanical Garden—thunderstorm forecasts again resulted in MBG being chosen for the day's walk, with seven people, including new member Albert Seppi, touring several outdoor areas with no rain, but luckily finding some places shaded from the 90° sun. Two *Chasmanthium latifolium* signs gave no less than three common names, North American wild oats, river oats and inland sea oats; other names in use are wild oats, sea oats and broadleaf spike grass. Why so many names are used for this plant is confusing, when the obvious "spangle grass" is much more descriptive. The group was unsuccessful in locating the state champion possumhaw (*Ilex decidua*) tree, reportedly near the mausoleum, to compare with a close contender seen in Dunklin County during the prior week's annual trip. Bumble bees were flocking to the white flowers of native wild hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens*)

and the bright yellow flowers of a St. John's wort (*Hypericum frondosum*) from the southwest U.S. Pat Harris found several patches of her favorite sedge, *Carex grayii* (spaceship sedge), while Father Sullivan recorded *Neacoryphus bicrucis* (lygaeid bug) on two plants of the Senecio tribe in the Asteraceae family, non-native *Ligularia* sp. and native *Cacalia muhlenbergii* (great Indian plantain).

June 25, Greensfelder Park, St. Louis County—only five turned out on a humid, 90's day to check the glade restoration site, as well as the adjacent roadside and forest trail. Unfortunately, the glade had not been burned resulting in being overrun with the exotic white sweet clover (*Melilotus albus*). Regardless, some natives were surviving, *Desmodium glutinosum* (large flowered tick clover), *Geum virginianum* (pale avens), *Asclepias tuberosus* (butterfly weed), *Hypericum sphaerocarpum* (round fruited St. John's wort) and a fair amount of *Dalea purpurea* (purple prairie clover). Few plants were seen in the forest, but snails were observed munching on pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) leaves, while bull frogs (*Rana catesbeianus*) croaked away in a pond covered with duckweed (*Lemna* sp.)

July 2, Valley View Glades Natural Area, Jefferson County—10 people started out, but only four finished as 95° decimated the ranks, while trekking over this hilly glade. For the early arrivals, the highway road shoulder yielded two nice *Asclepias* species, *A. tuberosa* (butterfly weed) and *A. verticillata* (whorled milkweed). The glade sported displays of *Hedyotis longifolia* (long leaved bluets), *Ruellia humilis* (fringed leaf ruellia), *Heliotropium tenellum* (slender heliotrope) and *Lobelia spicata* (spiked lobelia). Other interesting plants seen on the glade were *Silphium integrifolium* (entire leaved rosinweed), *Dalea purpurea* (purple prairie clover), *Sabatia angularis* (rose pink) and *Manfreda vir-*

ginica (false aloe). In the forested sections were found *Geum virginianum* (pale avens), *Polygala senega* (Seneca snakeroot), *Carex digitalis* (slender wood sedge) and *Dichanthelium boscii* (Bosc's panic grass). First-timer Dan Kassebaum pointed out two broad-winged hawks circling far overhead.

July 9, Castlewood State Park, St. Louis County—six persons, including new members Andrea & Jim Kennedy, again encountered temperatures in the 90's, while touring roadsides and sections of several trails near the Meramec River. Some of the more interesting plants seen were white vervain (*Verbena urticifolia*), green stemmed Joe Pye weed (*Eupatorium purpureum*), Virginia stickseed (*Hackelia virginiana*), sharpwing monkey flower (*Mimulus alatus*), northern fog fruit (*Phyla lanceolata*) and thinleaf betony (*Stachys tenuifolia*), the latter undergoing lengthy field study. However, *Mazus pumilus* (Japanese mazus), a non-native species new to the observers, required later research for positive identification.

July 16, Victoria Glade Conservation Area, Jefferson County—temperatures moderated slightly to the high 80's, as six people succeeded in their goal by finding nice stands of blue hearts (*Buchnera americana*). Also outstanding on the glade were both pink and white forms of *Sabatia angularis* (rose pink), plus yellow *Rudbeckia missouriensis* (Missouri coneflower). Among other plants found were *Ruellia humilis* (wild petunia), *Asclepias viridiflora* (green milkweed), *Solidago gattingeri* (Gattinger's goldenrod), *Manfreda virginica* (false aloe), *Leucospora multifida* (conobea), *Linum sulcatum* (grooved flax), *Eryngium yuccifolium* (rattlesnake master) and *Heliopsis helianthoides* (ox-eye).

July 23, Babler State Park, St. Louis County—seven people enjoyed pleasant weather in the high 70's, while checking the asphalt trail near the old visitor center.

Two pretty blue flowers seen were tall bellflower (*Campanula americana*) and hoary skullcap (*Scutellaria incana*) with a Haploa tiger moth (*Haploa sp.*) close by. Other flowering plants included yellow passion flower (*Passiflora lutea*), Indian tobacco (*Lobelia inflata*) and showy partridge pea (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*), with the petite, white blooms of small flowered tick clover (*Desmodium pauciflorum*) taking "plant of the day" honors. Some fruiting plants noted were doll's eyes (*Actaea pachypoda*), lopseed (*Phyrma leptostachya*), golden seal (*Hydrastis canadensis*), honewort (*Cryptotaenia canadensis*), enchanter's nightshade (*Circaea lutetania*) and everyone's favorite, poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*).

July 30, Missouri Botanical Garden—when three inches of rain flooded Gravois Creek, washing out a proposed visit to Grant's Trail, five members opted for the dryer Missouri Botanical Garden. The "Worlds of Desert Flora" display was much more than cactus, where a *Gonolobus sp.* (angle pod) vine was winding around several adjacent plants, along with a *Dioscorea sp.* (yam) sporting an enormous root system. In the Climatron, besides the dinosaurs and eggs, several showy species noted were maroonish-yellow flowers of *Sapranthus microcarpus*, related to the native pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) and *Aristolochia giganteiflora* (pipevine) with purple spotted white flowers. In the Schoenberg Center, a Pleistocene period fossil display had several butternut fruits (*Juglans cinerea*), found in St. Louis County.

August 6, Grant's Trail County Park, St. Louis County—only four members were present under 85° humid conditions, to enjoy the group's first outing on this recent addition to the St. Louis County Parks system. The paved trail, an old railroad bed, although complete with most of the prevalent non-native urban species, did have a

surprising number and diversity of native plants, including several enormous cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*) trees in adjacent Gravois Creek's mini-forest. At one point, the botanists gingerly passed under an active railroad trestle, reminiscent of old-time western movies. Numerous additions were made to Jack Harris' already lengthy plant list. In Father Sullivan's absence, aggressive field keying was required to identify several species, including *Ipomoea purpurea* (common morning glory), *Ammannia coccinea* (long leaf toothcup), *Cirsium arvense* (Canada thistle), *Lactuca canadensis* (wild lettuce), *L. serriola* (prickly lettuce) and *Physalis longifolia* (common ground cherry). Some plants abundant along the trail were *Verbesina alternifolia* (yellow ironweed), *Chamaesyce prostrata* (groundfig spurge), *C. nutans* (nodding spurge), *Impatiens capensis* (spotted touch-me-not), *Asclepias incarnata* (swamp milkweed), *Juncus torreyi* (Torrey's rush), *Polygonum lapathifolium* (pale smartweed), *Chamaecrista fasciculata* (showy partridge pea), *Rudbeckia triloba* (brown-eyed Susan) and *Phytolacca americana* (pokeweed).

August 13, Onondaga Cave State Park, Crawford County—seven persons, who turned out on a perfect, 85° summer day to enjoy a walk on the diverse Blue Heron Trail, could only imagine the conditions several weeks earlier, as evidenced by flood debris caught in trees 10 feet overhead. Nevertheless, some nice plants were seen, including *Vernonia gigantea* (tall ironweed), *Phlox paniculata* (perennial phlox) and *Sagittaria latifolia* (duck potato). The yellow, star-like flowers of *Heteranthera dubia* (water star grass) were abundant in a large pond, while tiny *Cyperus aristatus* (awned cyperus) grew along the muddy shore. Beneath the swiftly flowing Onondaga Spring branch's surface were found the leafy liverwort *Porella pinnata* (aquatic porella) and *Fissidens fontanus*

(narrow leaf plume moss). Father Sullivan spotted a heliopsis bug (*Lygaeus turcicus*), nectaring in a head of *Verbesina virginica* (white crownbeard), adjacent to its *Heliopsis helianthoides* (rough ox eye) breeding plant. Another bug (*Corythuca bulbosa*) occupying a bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*) leaf, sported a front "bumper" which appeared formidable through a magnifying glass.

August 20, Katy Trail State Park, St. Charles County—seven people sweltered under a hot, 90° sun, while walking north-east from the Weldon Springs trailhead, primarily in search for *Dalea leporina* (foxtail dalea), seen here in previous years. Father Sullivan found an enormous patch in a low, moist swale between the trail and river; this plant is relatively uncommon and generally follows the Missouri River bottomland. Other plants growing in profusion along the trail were *Ipomoea lacunosa* (small white morning glory), *I. hederacea* (blue morning glory), *Scrophularia marilandica* (figwort), *Desmodium glabellum* (tall tick clover), *Campanula americana* (tall bellflower) plus two grasses, *Digitaria ciliaris* (southern crab grass) and *Eragrostis pectinacea* (Carolina love grass). Raccoon grape (*Ampelopsis cordata*) and winter grape (*Vitis vulpina*) vines literally covered trees at several places. Some other interesting species were *Stachys pilosa* (woundwort), *Lactuca saligna* (willow leaved lettuce), *Spermacoce glabra* (smooth buttonweed), *Froelichia gracilis* (slender cottonweed), *Sida spinosa* (prickly sida) and *Echinodorus cordifolius* (burhead). Father Sullivan had no takers on two tests, *Acalypha ostryifolia* (hornbeam three seeded mercury) and *Parietaria pensylvanica* (Pennsylvania pellitory).

August 27, Lone Elk County Park, St. Louis County—seven persons enjoyed a relatively comfortable 85° day, while trekking the steep hill of Chubb Trail's

eastern end, then a gravel road along the bottomland railroad track. The railroad provided not only a paperweight for Jack Harris in form of a large bolt stamped with initials "JH", but also the thrill of a speeding, monstrous freight train. Some good species seen along the trail were *Chamaecrista nictitans* (sensitive partridge pea), *Allium stellatum* (wild onion), *Agalinis tenuifolia* (slender gerardia), *Lespedeza violacea* (prairie bush clover), *Pilea pumila* (clearweed), *Desmodium pauciflorum* (small flowered tick clover), *Sicyos angulatus* (bur cucumber), plus two grasses, *Leersia virginica* (white grass) and *Agrostis perennans* (upland bent). The railroad track provided a rich diversity of blooming vines including *Apios americana* (groundnut), *Amphicarpaea bracteata* (hog peanut), *Clematis virginiana* (virgin's bower) and *Ipomoea pandurata* (wild potato vine), as well as *Verbesina alternifolia* (yellow ironweed), *Cyperus strigosus* (straw colored cyperus), *Eragrostis minor* (little love grass), *Scutellaria incana* (hoary skullcap), *Lobelia siphilitica* (blue lobelia) and the uncommon *Cacalia suaveolens* (sweet scented Indian plantain). The love grass was the same one found in last fall's Missouri Native Plant Society's Metro-Link plant survey.

Thanks to Pat Harris for contributing to this article.



our website

<http://levee.wustl.edu/~rlk/wgnss/>

Next Deadline: Dec. 11



October 1998 Birding Report

Jim Ziebol, Yvonne Homeyer &
Kevin Renick

September Omissions: There were 9 Eared Grebes at Carlyle Lake in September (DK). Paul Bauer reported 3 Veery on 9/8 at Spanish Lake and 300-350 Nighthawks over his home on 9/15.

October Sightings: A Red-throated Loon was seen at Carlyle on 10/31 (m. ob.) A group of 33 Pied-billed Grebes was at Horseshoe Lake on 10/21 (FH), and 25 were also at the Lake 33 dam/Busch Conservation Area on 10/7 (J Mo). Horned Grebes started to come in on 10/10 (J Mo) and 5 were present with 1 Eared Grebe at Horseshoe Lake on 10/25 (D Bz, BK). An Eared Grebe was seen on 10/10 at the Reiter Sewage Lagoon (BR & group). One thousand White Pelicans were at Swan Lake/Mark Twain NWR at 10/17 (J Mo et al.) American Bittern was seen as late as 10/17 at Carlyle Lake (DK). Fifteen Black-crowned Night Herons were seen migrating at dusk on 10/1 at Carlyle (DK) and 4 were observed at Horseshoe Lake on 10/4 (FH). Ten White Egrets were seen at the Borrow Pit on 10/22 (FH) and 23 Great Blue Herons were at Riverlands on 10/3 (J Mo). One White-faced Ibis was found at Clarence Cannon Wildlife Refuge on 10/17 (JM). A *Plegadis* ibis was reported at Carlyle on 10/18 (DK). A Black Scoter was noted at Green Meadows/Carlyle Lake on 10/30 (DK).

The area's first Golden Eagle was found on 10/24 near Riverlands (DC). A large immature female Cooper's hawk was exploring the creek in Tower Grove Park on 10/14 (JZ). Merlin were reported throughout the area: on 10/6 at Horseshoe Lake (D Bz), on 10/8 at Riverlands (T&GB), on 10/17 at Carlyle (DK), and on 10/21 at Lake 7/Busch (J Mo). Fifteen Turkey Vultures were observed by the Dick Coles' class on 10/17 at Riverlands (DC et al.).

The area's only Virginia Rail was found at Heron Pond/RL (TB). A Common Moorhen was found at the Boat Launch/Horseshoe on 10/12 (DK) and this was the only Moorhen reported in the area. This bird used to be relatively common in the marshy areas on the east side.

A first winter California Gull, first observed on 10/1 at the Borrow Pit, was hot-lined and seen by many birders during the following week (JZ*, FH YH). We dedicate this unusual sighting in memory of our friend and fellow birder Jack Van Benthuyzen. Franklin's Gulls peaked at the Borrow Pit on 10/11 with 44 counted (FH). Fall's first Lesser Black-backed Gull was seen at Carlyle on 10/10 (BR). Thirty-five Franklin's Gulls were present at the Borrow Pit on 10/11 (FH). Bonaparte's Gulls were noted on 10/10 at Riverlands (J Mo) and 40+ were seen at the Dredge IL on 10/25 (D Bz). A Common Tern was observed at the Borrow Pit on 10/18 (BK). Two Greater and 2 Lesser Yellowlegs were found on Weiss Road on 10/14 (MT). Carlyle Lake produced 82 Least, 12 Pectoral and 200 Dunlin on 10/18 (CA, DK). Thirty-three Dunlin were resting in the Borrow Pit on 10/30 (MT). A Hudsonian Godwit was an unexpected visitor on 10/15 at Hazlet State Park (KM); within a day or two, 3 other Hudsonian Godwits also made an appearance there. Single Red-necked Phalaropes were seen on 10/10 and 10/17 at Carlyle (DK). Two tardy Nighthawks were seen at Horseshoe on 10/28 (FH).

A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was seen on 10/10 at Clarence Cannon (JM et al.). Marsh and Sedge Wrens were plentiful throughout the area. Tree Swallows numbering 1000+, with a few Barn Swallows, were at Swan Lake/Mark Twain NWR on 10/17 (DC). Two Peewees were quite late on 10/10 at Carlyle (DK). Fifteen Black-capped Chickadees and a Hermit Thrush

were observed at Archery/Busch Conservation Area on 10/26 (J Mo). Hermit Thrush were fairly common, with 10+ at Tower Grove on 10/2 and 9 on 10/30 (JZ). Solitary Vireos remained plentiful in October, with 1 to 4 birds present at Hazlet and TGP until 10/27 (DK, JZ). Warbler migration went from slow to poor in early October. A possible record late Blue-winged Warbler was seen at TGP on 10/4 and Magnolias and Black-and-Whites were also found (D Bz). TGP produced a Black-and-White Warbler on 10/6 (CM). A Palm Warbler, yellow race, was found at Carlyle on 10/25 (DK). A Tennessee and a Nashville were at the Borrow Pit on 10/18 (YH, BW). The usual mid-October peak of Tennessee, Nashville, etc., failed to occur this year. Orange-crowned were generally slow at this time. Yellow-rumped were occasionally abundant with a major flight at Riverlands on 10/10 (RB et al.) End-of-the-month sightings include Pine, Black-throated Green, Tennessee at TGP on 10/28 and a Tennessee on 10/29 at Weldon Springs Wildlife Management (CA).

Fox, Swamp and Lincoln's Sparrows first appeared at TGP on 10/1 (JZ). A major sparrow movement took place on 10/10 all over the area. A high count was at the Borrow Pit with 9 species found: Vesper, LeConte's, Swamp, Clay-colored, Lincoln's, White-throated, White-crowned, Song, and Chipping. Similar flights occurred at Riverlands, Carlyle, Busch and Clarence Cannon NWR. A group of more than 30 Swamp was impressive at the Borrow Pit from 10/10 through 10/18, with a similar number seen at Clarence Cannon on 10/10 (JM). A single Clay-colored was found at the Arboretum on 10/11 (RK), and from 10/10 through 10/18 at the Borrow Pit (D Bz, FH, et al.). A nice flock of 50+ Savannas was found at Horseshoe on 10/6 (JZ). A single Sharp-tailed Sparrow was observed on 10/13 at Heron Pond/RL (D

Bz) and on 10/10 at Clarence Cannon (JM). There were many sightings of LeConte's on 10/10 area-wide, with 5 at Heron Pond/RL (CA, KL, TBO), one at Riverlands on 10/11 (TB), one at Riverlands on 10/15 (GB). They were still being seen on 10/31 at Riverlands (T&GB). Lincoln's had one of the best fall showings ever, with 50 +/- at the Borrow Pit on 10/10 and similar numbers at Riverlands and BCA (m. ob.). An immature Harris' Sparrow was found at the Borrow Pit on 10/18 (BW). Twenty-five Pine Siskins were present at Riverlands on 10/10 (RB). In mid-October Pine Siskins visited the Delashmit's feeder near Union. A late Rose-breasted Grosbeak was observed on 10/17 at Carlyle (DK). A Spotted Towhee was a nice find at Weldon Springs WMA on 10/29 (CA, KL).

Comments: An apparent albino Red-winged Blackbird was at Riverlands on 10/19 (T Br). A Eurasian Collared-Dove was observed south of Millstadt on 10/2 (DK). An escaped Budgie has been seen in South St. Louis for the last month in a flock of House Sparrows (JZ). Both Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets were numerous in migration as were Hermit Thrush (D Bz). Solitary Vireo (Blue-headed) continue to increase in numbers in both spring and fall migration and were very apparent this October. A species conspicuous by its absence is Fox Sparrow, with sparing reports.

Contributors: Connie Alwood, Terry & George Barker, (T Br) Tory Berger, Rose Ann Bodman, (TBO) Tom Bormann, Dennis Bozzay, Frank Holmes, Yvonne Homeyer, Dan Kassebaum, Bob Kleiger, Randy Korotev, Kent Lannert, Jim & Charlene Malone, Keith McMullen, Jeannie Moe, Bill Rowe, Mike Treffert, Bruce Wetteroth, Jim Ziebol, and (m. ob.) many observers. ~

Jack Van Benthuisen Memorial Fund

The board of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society thanks the following people for contributions to the Society in memory of Jack Van Benthuisen.

Mildred Anderson

George and Terry Barker

Dottie and John Herweg

Kathy Kelly

Marshall and Ernestine Magner

The board solicits opinions from the members on a worthy and appropriate memorial to Jack.

Jack Van cont. from p. 1

Even more significant than this record are his two state records. On April 2, 1994 Jack was on his way to the Lost Valley Hiking and Biking Trail at Weldon Springs. It was raining too hard so Jack decided to try Lake 33 at the Busch Conservation Area instead. By the end of the day over fifty birders from the area had Garganey listed as a state bird.

In February, 1997, Jack saw a strange gull on the Mississippi River near Riverlands. He carefully studied his birding guides, he talked to several experts and within a few days most of us had another Missouri state bird: the Glaucous-winged Gull. Both of Jack's state finds were accepted by the Missouri Bird Records Committee. In fact, as was reported in last month's edition of *Nature Notes*, the Glaucous-winged Gull was selected as the Missouri state bird of the year.

Birding with Jack was a reentry into boyhood. He was as excited about a Saturday outing as most children are about a holiday. Often he would tell me that he awoke in the middle of the night and had difficulty getting back to sleep because he was restless to pursue the birds. In the spring of 1996 Jack was told that his colon

cancer had moved into his liver. He continued to bird with the same enthusiasm. He went to Minnesota, Arizona twice, Colorado, but two trips out west had to be canceled because of the disease. Anyone seeing Jack this spring must have been shocked at his appearance, but that was all that had changed. He remained the same good-natured person he had always been. Until he died, his only complaint was not getting to see more birds. ∞

One of the Best

Bill Rowe

The following was posted on the "Mo Bird's" e-mail list server.

This is just a quick memo to note, sadly, the death of Jack Van Benthuisen on Friday, October 9, at the age of 72. Jack was one of the most enthusiastic birders in the St. Louis area over a period of at least 50 years and one of the best. He contributed untold numbers of good records to the annals of birding here, including at least 2 first Missouri records that I am aware of (Garganey and Glaucous-winged Gull) and probably others that I don't recall. Over the past 10 years, since his retirement, about half the local hotlines seemed to come through with Jack's name attached.

As a friend and birding companion, Jack was one of the best. He loved going birding no matter what the conditions, and he had a wit that wouldn't stop—especially when it came to puns. None of us who birded with him will ever see a shrike again without thinking of Jack and muttering "three shrikes and you're out!" ∞

Another Tribute to Jack Van

Tim Barksdale

Also from the "Mo Bird's" list server.

I was out of town when Jack Van passed along. I will only share a few other thoughts of Jack that further endeared him to me. I was very close to Dick Anderson,

we often commiserated, plotted and compared notes with each other on many subjects over the years. Near the end of Dick's life when things continued to be so hard for him I'll never forget the many times I would find Dick being driven around in that van by Jack. The kindness of such a very simple thing meant an enormous amount to Dick and spoke volumes about Jack. I will remember in my heart both of these great Missouri birders and friends until we are united in the "Happy Birding Heaven". Until then, I will miss them both. ~

WGNSS Internet Web Site

Randy Korotev

Thanks to all of you who have responded with information on where to find Eurasian Tree Sparrows for the WGNSS web site (I still have to return calls from some of you). We have already received feedback from people who have found this site and thought it was useful. If you are contacted by people who want to find an ETS, let them know about this site; it contains maps and a lot of information, and it will contain more as I accumulate more info. There's also an on-line bird list to let people know what species to expect in the area at different times of the year. The URL is:

<http://levee.wustl.edu/~rlk/wgnss/>

Between October 15 when I first began logging "hits" and Nov. 2, there were 66 accesses to this site (several of which were by me). One was from France and another from Canada. Persons using the Internet to search for information on Eurasian Tree Sparrows, nature study groups, or Webster Groves are now likely to find our site. If you've visited the site and have any ideas for other information we should include, let me know at the e-mail address I list there: rlk@levee.wustl.edu ~

Rare Bird Review Lists

Bill Rowe

Attached to this issue of *Nature Notes* are the review lists published by the Missouri Bird Records Committee and the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee. These lists show the rarest species of birds that have been recorded in each state. The committees would like to have documentation submitted for any sighting of a species on the list, with certain exceptions or restrictions as shown (for instance, Chestnut-collared Longspur does not need to be documented in western Missouri because of the number of records, whereas it is extremely rare, with very few records, in the eastern part of the state and therefore needs documentation there). Note that the criterion is the number of records, not the difficulty of identification; in the case of Missouri, all species that are designated "casual" or "accidental" on the new Missouri Check-list are included. Both committees, however, also wish to review any birds that are less rare but are seriously out of season—that is, any species found during a period when it is casual or accidental, even if it is normal at other seasons. A good example might be a Red-eyed Vireo in January. A species that is later than usual but not drastically out of season (like a Red-eyed Vireo in October) should be reported to the seasonal editor. Naturally, any species that isn't even on the Missouri Check-list is a must for documentation! Any questions about the lists, or about documenting a bird, may be addressed to the Secretaries of the Committees.

Seasonal Editors: All Missouri birders who send their sightings for each season into the state and national reporting network need to know that there have been changes in where to send things. Every issue of *The Bluebird* lists the seasonal editors for Missouri, but the most recent list

published in the September issue is no longer correct for two of the four seasons.

The December *Bluebird* will list the correct seasonal editors for the next four seasons including this fall, and this information has also been put out on MoBird. But just to make sure that it reaches the greatest number of people, here are the editors' names:

For fall '98 (new): Send reports by December 10 to Chris Hobbs, 13121 Swartz Rd., Bonner Springs, KS 66012 (913/441-2473).

For winter (unchanged): Send reports by March 10 to Brad Jacobs, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102 (573/751-4115).

For spring '99 (new): Send reports by June 10 to Randy Korotev, 800 Oakbrook Ln., St. Louis, MO 63132 (314/993-0055).

For summer (unchanged): Send reports by August 10 to Jim D. Wilson, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102 (573/751-4115).

The next report (fall '99) will be edited by Bill Eddleman of Cape Girardeau, whose address will begin appearing in *The Bluebird* in 1999.

For those who have not previously sent in seasonal reports, you are encouraged to look over your records and send in notes on whatever was unusual or potentially of statewide interest—any rare species, any unusually large numbers or unusually early or late dates (check *The Birds of Missouri* or *Birds of the St. Louis Area* for information on this), any interesting trends or other comparisons with past years. The editors read all the notes that people send them, sort out what seem to them the more significant items, and pull them together into a chronicle of what was seen around the state over that season. Each seasonal report is published in *The Bluebird*. It also goes on to the editor of the Middlewestern Prairie Region for the magazine *Field Notes*, who

then prints his report and all other regional reports from around the country.

“Regular” rarities that are more than casual or accidental should be reported via this means. A few examples are Red-throated Loon, Northern Goshawk, and Black-throated Blue Warbler—good birds anywhere in the state, but too regular and too frequently seen to be on the review list. It's a good idea, when reporting such birds, to include some descriptive details (at least this observer always does) to reassure the editor that the bird was correctly identified.

Any of the seasonal editors will be glad to answer questions about how you might format your reports, or what to include.

Rare bird lists for Missouri and Illinois follow on pages 13 & 14. ~

Next Deadline: Dec. 11

Since we mail our publication on the third Monday and the month begins on a Tuesday, we have the **latest possible deadline** for the next issue. In other words, you have more time to submit! Submissions—handwritten, typed, IBM or Mac to: Anne McCormack, 587 Andrews, St. Louis MO 63122. Computer wizards: Thanks for sending a printout along with your disk.

Last minute change? Call me at 965-8091, voice mail 965-7205 or e-mail me at: **finearts@mail.stjosephacad.com** ~

Styerson nature line

Call 935-8432 for a summary of the latest bird sightings in the St. Louis area. Please report any unusual birds to Connie Alwood, 524-8111. ~

 **our website**

<http://levee.wustl.edu/~rlk/wgnss/>

Need directions?

Riverlands Environmental Dem. Area

- From I-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.
- We usually meet at Teal Pond, on right.

Tyson Research Center

- 44 west to Antire Rd., then right.
- Sign in at the gate.

West County Shopping Center

- Located at 270 & Manchester.
- Meet at the south (lower) parking lot, near Penney's, at lamp post #1.

1997-8 WGNSS Board

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

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2nd Vice Pres: Vicki Flier, 18 Algonquin Wood, St. Louis MO 63122, 968-9166

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Member at Large: Tom O'Gorman, 465 N. Geyer, St. Louis MO 63122, 821-8079.

Member at Large: Jim Ziebol, 3900 Berger Ave., St. Louis MO 63109 781-7372. ☺

internet address

<http://levee.wustl.edu/~rlk/wgnss/>

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MISSOURI BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE REVIEW LIST

These species generally occur less than annually, or only in a limited part of Missouri; they are marked "casual" or "accidental" on the Missouri Check-list (1998), or are hypothetical. Any of these, or any species that is not on the Check-list, is rare enough to warrant review by the Committee. The Committee welcomes evidence of their occurrence in the form of written documentation, photograph, sketch, video, or specimen. For any other species on the Check-list, the Committee will review out-of-season occurrences, first nesting records, etc. Note: For Christmas Bird Counts, a separate, more extensive review list of species requiring documentation has been published in *The Bluebird*.

Yellow-billed Loon	Purple Sandpiper	Fish Crow (except Miss. R. and SE)
Clark's Grebe	Curlew Sandpiper	Common Raven
Band-rumped Storm-Petrel	Ruff	Violet-green Swallow
Brown Pelican	Pomarine Jaeger	Carolina Chickadee (N only)
Neotropic Cormorant (E only)	Parasitic Jaeger	Black-capped Chickadee (S only)
Anhinga (except SE)	Long-tailed Jaeger	Rock Wren
Magnificent Frigatebird	Little Gull	Mountain Bluebird
Tricolored Heron	Black-headed Gull	Townsend's Solitaire (except NW)
Reddish Egret	California Gull	Varied Thrush
White Ibis	Thayer's Gull #	Sage Thrasher
Roseate Spoonbill	Iceland Gull #	Sprague's Pipit (E only)
Wood Stork	Lesser Black-backed Gull #	Bohemian Waxwing
Black Vulture (N only)	Slaty-backed Gull	Bachman's Warbler
Greater Flamingo	Glaucous-winged Gull	Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's)
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	Great Black-backed Gull#	Hermit Warbler
Fulvous Whistling-Duck	Sabine's Gull	Kirtland's Warbler
Brant	Black-legged Kittiwake#	Swainson's Warbler (except extreme S)
Barnacle Goose*	Ross's Gull	MacGillivray's Warbler
Mute Swan*	Sooty Tern	Western Tanager
Trumpeter Swan*	Band-tailed Pigeon	Green-tailed Towhee
Eurasian Wigeon	Eurasian Collared-Dove	Cassin's Sparrow
Cinnamon Teal (E only)	White-winged Dove	Bachman's Sparrow (except S Ozarks)
Garganey	Inca Dove	Black-throated Sparrow
Common Eider	Common Ground-Dove	Lark Bunting
Harlequin Duck	Greater Roadrunner	Baird's Sparrow
Barrow's Goldeneye	(except SW)	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Swallow-tailed Kite	Groove-billed Ani	McCown's Longspur
White-tailed Kite	Burrowing Owl	Chestnut-collared Longspur (E only)
Harris's Hawk	Common Poorwill	Snow Bunting (S only)
Ferruginous Hawk	White-throated Swift	Black-headed Grosbeak
Gyr Falcon	Green Violet-ear	Lazuli Bunting
Gray Partridge	Anna's Hummingbird	Painted Bunting (except SW)
Black Rail	Rufous Hummingbird	Great-tailed Grackle (E only)
Sandhill Crane (E only)	Lewis's Woodpecker	Bronzed Cowbird
Whooping Crane	Black-backed Woodpecker	Bullock's Oriole
Snowy Plover (except NW)	Say's Phoebe	Pine Grosbeak
Wilson's Plover	Vermilion Flycatcher	Hoary Redpoll
Mountain Plover	Northern Shrike (except NW)	Lesser Goldfinch
Eskimo Curlew	Gray Jay	Eurasian Tree Sparrow #
Whimbrel (E only)	Clark's Nutcracker	
Long-billed Curlew	Black-billed Magpie	

except vicinity of St. Louis
* if known to be of wild origin

Please send documentation to the Secretary: William C. Rowe, 9033 Big Bend, St. Louis, MO 63119.

ILLINOIS ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE

Review List

IORC accepts for review bird records which, in general, do not occur annually in Illinois, or which are extremely rare in all but a few counties in the state. The committee also is interested in reviewing other records of significance including first state nesting records, unusual dates or locations of occurrence, etc. The review list is based on the current draft of the Illinois Checklist being prepared by IORC. Any species not included on the Illinois IORC checklist or not listed in the Birds of Illinois (Bohlen 1989) should be documented. The committee welcomes evidence+ in the form of a written documentation, sketch, photograph, video or specimen for any of the following species:

Pacific Loon
 Yellow-billed Loon
 Clark's Grebe
 Northern Gannet
 Brown Pelican
 Neotropic Cormorant
 Anhinga
 Magnificent Frigatebird
 Tricolored Heron
 Reddish Egret
 White Ibis
 Glossy Ibis
 White-faced Ibis
 Wood Stork
 Black Vulture**
 Fulvous Whistling-Duck
 Brant
 Eurasian Wigeon
 Garganey
 Cinnamon Teal
 Tufted Duck
 King Eider
 Common Eider
 Harlequin Duck*
 Barrow's Goldeneye
 Swallow-tailed Kite
 White-tailed Kite
 Mississippi Kite**
 Swainson's Hawk***
 Ferruginous Hawk
 Gyrfalcon
 Prairie Falcon
 Black Rail
 Purple Gallinule
 Whooping Crane
 Snowy Plover
 Whimbrel*
 Long-billed Curlew
 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
 Purple Sandpiper
 Curlew Sandpiper
 Ruff
 Pomarine Jaeger

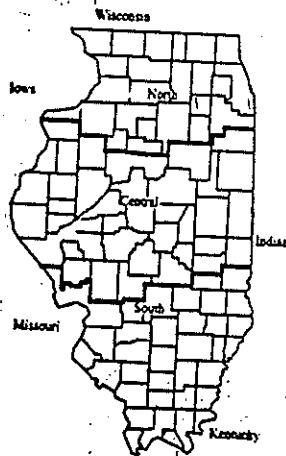
Parasitic Jaeger
 Long-tailed Jaeger
 Black-headed Gull
 Mew Gull
 California Gull
 Slaty-backed Gull
 Western Gull
 Glaucous-winged Gull
 Ross' Gull
 Ivory Gull
 Gull-billed Tern
 Royal Tern
 Sandwich Tern
 Arctic Tern
 Large-billed Tern
 Dovekie
 Ancient Murrelet
 Band-tailed Pigeon
 Eurasian Collared-Dove
 Common Ground-Dove
 Groove-billed Ani
 Barn Owl
 Northern Hawk Owl
 Burrowing Owl
 Boreal Owl
 Broad-billed Hummingbird
 Rufous Hummingbird
 Allen's Hummingbird
 Williamson's Sapsucker
 Black-backed Woodpecker
 Western Wood-Pewee
 Say's Phoebe
 Vermilion Flycatcher
 Ash-throated Flycatcher
 Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
 Steller's Jay
 Western Scrub-Jay
 Clark's Nutcracker
 Black-billed Magpie
 Violet-green Swallow
 Boreal Chickadee
 Rock Wren
 Northern Wheatear

Mountain Bluebird
 Townsend's Solitaire
 Varied Thrush
 Sage Thrasher
 Curve-billed Thrasher
 Sprague's Pipit
 Bohemian Waxwing
 Black-throated Gray Warbler
 Townsend's Warbler
 Kirtland's Warbler
 Swainson's Warbler
 MacGillivray's Warbler
 Hepatic Tanager
 Western Tanager
 Green-tailed Towhee
 Cassin's Sparrow
 Bachman's Sparrow
 Brewer's Sparrow
 Black-throated Sparrow
 Lark Bunting
 Golden-crowned Sparrow
 Chestnut-collared Longspur
 Black-headed Grosbeak
 Lazuli Bunting
 Painted Bunting
 Great-tailed Grackle
 Bullock's Oriole
 Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch
 Pine Grosbeak
 Hoary Redpoll

*except Lake Michigan

**except southern Illinois

***except Kane and southern McHenry Cos.



+ All review list evidence and documentation forms should be sent directly to the IORC Secretary: David B. Johnson, 504 Crown Point Drive, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089 or to the IORC Secretary c/o of the Avian Ecology Program, Natural Heritage Div., DNR, Springfield IL 62701.



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Meetings

Wednesday, Dec. 2

7:00-8:30 PM Board meeting at Kirkwood Library on Jefferson in Kirkwood. All members welcome.

Sunday, Dec. 6

Open House with St. Louis Audubon at Tyson, 1:00-4:00. Take 44 west to Antire, then right. Bring a favorite dish and binoculars. Beverages provided. For more info., call Vicki Flier 968-9166.

Birding

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

Thursdays in Nov. & Dec.

8:30 AM West County shopping center, south lower lot behind Penney's, lamp post #1. We don't meet on 11/26.

Saturday Nov. 21 & Dec. 12

8:00 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond.

Saturday Dec. 5

8:00 AM Horseshoe Lk; pavilion.

Saturday Dec. 5

9 AM WGNSS/Audubon birdwalk at Horseshoe Lake, Madison Co., IL. Meet on the Hwy 111 side at first picnic/playground area after the entrance. Dress for weather. For more information call Paul Bauer, 314/921-3972, or Jim Malone 314/536-1119.

Saturday Dec. 19

Xmas Count at Pere Marquette Park. Some areas will be preassigned, others meet at Pere Marquette Lodge at 7:30 AM. For more info, call Irene Mondhink (618-885-5233), or Helen Wuestenfeld (618-498-5335). \$5 fee

Botany

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

Thurs. Nov. 19, Dec. 3, 10, 17

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.

Sunday Dec. 20:

Busch Xmas Count! Meet at HQ at 8:00 AM. Bring lunch. Call Tom Parmeter 921-6017. Fee \$5.

Saturday Jan. 2:

Orchard Farm Xmas Count! Call Randy Korotev, 935-5637, and leave message. Fee \$5.


Saturday Jan. 16

9 AM WGNSS/Audubon birdwalk at Riverlands Environmental Demo. Area, St. Charles Co., MO. Meet at the Teal Pond parking lot. Dress for cold/windy weather. Focus will be on eagles, raptors, waterfowl, gulls and wintering sparrows/finches. For more information Paul Bauer, 314/921-3972 or Jim Malone, 314/536-1119.

Deadline for *Nature Notes* is **Dec. 11**

Check WGNSS website!

<http://levee.wustl.edu/~rlk/wgnss/>

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St. Louis MO 63119

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Editor: Anne McCormack, 587 Andrews, St. Louis MO 63122
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