



# Nature Notes

Journal of Webster Groves Nature Study Society January 2003 Vol. 75, No. 1

## Christmas Bird Counts

### Orchard Farm

The Orchard Farm Christmas bird count will be held on Wed., **Jan. 1**, 2003. To join us, contact Randy Korotev, 314-993-0055, rlk@levee.wustl.edu It will be very important this year to count species such as crows, jays, and raptors to see if the West Nile virus has made any significant dent on the populations.

The National Audubon Society requires that participants contribute \$5 to help defray the costs of publishing results. To learn more, visit the web site at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/> Data from past bird counts are available.

### Clarence Cannon NWR

Clarence Cannon Count, Lincoln and Pike Co., will be on **Dec. 28** this year, the first official count for this circle. It also includes Prairie Slough CA and BK Leach CA. For anyone who would like to participate, contact Scott Schuette at 636-528-6544 or baessch@nothnbut.net

### Mingo NWR

Mingo Count in southeast Mo. will be on Sat., **Dec. 28**. Meet at 6 AM at Mel's Diner in Puxico, Mo. Call Paul Bauer, 314-921-3972.

### Busch Wildlife

Busch/Weldon Spring count will be **Jan. 4**, 2003. We'll start at 8 AM at the Headquarters parking lot. Bring a lunch. For details, call Tom Parmeter, 314-921-6017 or e-mail TKSP@aol.com ☞

## Birds of Asia, Thursday, Jan. 16

Mike Flieg

Walter Liddell will do a slide presentation entitled "Bird Images of Southeast Asia" at the WGNSS general meeting held at the St. Louis Co. Library Headquarters on Thurs., Jan. 16 at 7 PM ☞

## Greetings from the President

Yvonne Homeyer

I hope all of you are enjoying the holiday season. Lots of us gathered at Tyson on Dec. 8 for our holiday party and shared stories, laughter and good wishes for the coming year. What's ahead for WGNSS as we enter our 83rd year? For one thing, you'll find that we are expanding the number of weekend field trips. In addition to the traditional Thurs. Botany Walks led by Jack Harris and Father Sullivan, the Thurs. Bird Walks with Jackie Chain, and the Sat. Bird Walks led by David Becher, you will now be able to go birding with WGNSS just about every Sunday as well. Kent Lannert has lined up many volunteers to lead the new Sunday Bird

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Walks, which started in September. Starting in the spring, we will also be offering some weekend Botany Walks, which we hope to co-sponsor with the Missouri Native Plant Society. So there will be more opportunities to get out and enjoy nature, see old friends and make new ones. In May we will honor Dorothy Heinze, a founding member, with a posthumous Lifetime Achievement Award. WGNSS will continue to work with other organizations to promote habitat preservation and bird/plant/wildlife conservation. We are exploring ways to preserve the largest remaining glade in Jefferson County – the last project Dorothy Heinze was working on before her death. We will again be searching for qualified students to take advantage of our two scholarship programs. And of course you can continue to count on interesting meetings/programs—still at the St. L. County Library Headquarters but the dates vary; check the newsletter—and an educational and informative *Nature Notes*. We are always open to new ideas, so please let us hear from you. It is a privilege to serve as your President and I wish each and every one of you a happy New Year ☺.

## Dates for 2003 Meetings

all meetings begin at 7:30 PM

- 🦅 Thurs., Jan. 16 St. L. Co. L-HQ
- 🦅 Fri., Feb. 14 joint meeting with SL Audubon at Creve Coeur Government Center on N. New Ballas Rd.
- 🦅 Mon., March 10 St. L. Co. L-HQ
- 🦅 Mon., April 14 St. L. Co. L-HQ
- 🦅 Thurs., May 8 Spring Banquet Eden Seminary, Webster
- 🦅 Thurs., Sept. 18 St. L. Co. L-HQ
- 🦅 Tues., Oct. 7 St. L. Co. L-HQ
- 🦅 Thurs., Nov. 20, 2003 St. L. Co. L-HQ



## Your Area-Year-List

*Nature Notes* congratulate anyone diligent enough to keep a year-list for the St. Louis area. If you kept one and would like your name listed with your 2002 total, please send your total to:

Anne McCormack  
587 Andrews Ave.  
St. Louis MO 63122  
or call 314-965-8091  
or e-mail amccormack@stjosephacad.org

## St. Louis Area Bird of the Year

What bird area made the biggest impression on your year? Send your nomination or article to: Anne McCormack, above ☺.

## Welcome to new members...

Shawn Clubb  
Connie Cooper  
Christine Estes  
Kathleen Ferrell  
Alberto Galofre  
Frederick Hamly MD  
Charlie & Marilyn Hoessle  
Lisa A K Hollenbeck  
Joan Hughes  
Delwin Johnson  
Anne Marie Kettler  
Edward & Gladys Kullman  
Suzanne Leopold  
Ellen Norris  
Myriam Pelly  
Carl & Jackie Rausch  
Art Schaffer  
Alexander Scheuerlein  
Bill Schwindt  
Jean Siesener  
Rheba Symeonoglou  
The Green Center  
Gail & Larry Thoele  
David Ziolkowski Jr ☺

## Nature Line Update

Yvonne Homeyer

Our most recent coordinator for the Tyson Nature Line is Connie Alwood, who took over from Jack Van Benthuisen a few years ago. Connie has been doing a wonderful job keeping us informed about recent bird sightings. We want to thank Connie for his invaluable service in keeping the Nature Line going. As of January 1, however, Connie will no longer be the voice on the Nature Line. Who will the next person or persons be? We are looking for one or two volunteers to take over this position. Although traditionally we have had just one person in charge, the job could easily be coordinated between two people. If you are willing to spend an hour or so each week pulling together the latest information on bird sightings, and then recording a message for the Nature Line, please call Yvonne Homeyer at 314-963-7750. And thanks again to Connie Alwood for his many years of dedicated service ♡

## Conservation Forum at St. L. Zoo

Dianne Benjamin

"Save Dorothy's Glade" was the theme of this year's WGNSS display at the Conservation Forum on Thurs. evening, Nov. 14 at the Saint Louis Zoo's The Living World. The 800-acre South Platin/Surdyke tract glade puts the pizzazz back in pristine. Dorothy Heinze was a lifelong nature enthusiast and activist, and a charter member of WGNSS in 1920. In May 2002, just before her death at age 91, she asked WGNSS to help save this largest glade remaining in Jefferson Co.

Our vibrant display featured colorful drawings and photographs by WGNSS members of unique, local glade bird, butterfly, lizard, salamander, and plant species. Featured was the rare Fremont's leather flower—at S-3, Species of Concern, Missouri Department of Conservation. About 200 Conservation Forum participants viewed our display and many took glade educational materials and WGNSS membership brochures. Thanks to Ann Earley, Jim Ziebol,

Yvonne Homeyer, Jack Harris, Dennis Bozzay, Ron Goetz, and Dave Tylka for assisting with the display exhibits.

Dorothy Heinze is well known for her efforts in acquiring and saving Victoria Glade, as well as creating Mastodon State Park and opposing a casino in Kimmswick. She is the posthumous recipient of our Lifetime Achievement Award at our upcoming Annual Banquet May 8, 2003. If you would like to make a contribution to the Dorothy Heinze Memorial Fund, then please send it to our Treasurer, Randy Korotev, 800 Oakbrook, St. Louis, MO 63132 ♡

## Summer Botanizing

Carl Darigo

Botany Group weekly Thurs. outings continued throughout the summer season, with the following attending one or more times: Father James Sullivan, Dave Alspaugh, Mike Arduser, Diane Benjamin, Nancy & Wayne Clark, Jeanne Clauson, Carl Darigo, Joyce & Bill Davit, Jane Deschu, Dorothy & Ed Emery, Pat Grace, Pat & Jack Harris, Nels Holmberg, Katie Hurrelmeyer, Del Johnson & grandson Sean, Gladys & Ed Kullman, John McCollum, Edith Mertzluft, Jeannie Moe, Fran & Tom O'Gorman, John Oliver, Bob Siemer, Nancy & John Solodar, Bill Summers, Kathy Thiele, Aimee & Cindy Wegescheide, Bob Wells and Martha Younkin.

June 6, Valley View Glades Natural Area, Jefferson County—12 persons checked out Valley View Trail's glades and forest on an enjoyable 75° day. The glade was colorful with bright yellow *Oenothera macrocarpa* (Missouri primrose), *Echinacea simulata* (pale purple coneflower), tiny blue flowers of *Scutellaria parvula* (small skullcap), fuzzy white heads of *Parthenium integrifolium* (American feverfew) and yellow *Coreopsis lanceolata* (tickseed coreopsis). Some in the group sampled the ripening fruits of ground plum (*Astragalus crassicarpus*). *Carex eburnea* (bristle leaf sedge) was plentiful along the glade/forest margin. Seen in the forest areas were *Heuchera americana* (hairy

alum root), which was keyed by Jack Harris and Nels Holmberg in the field, *Panicum boscii* (Bosc's panic grass) and *Rosa carolina* (pasture rose). Even Hwy. B road shoulder added some interesting plants, *Tradescantia subaspera* (broad leaf spiderwort), *Panicum linearifolium* (white-haired panic grass) and *Verbena simplex* (narrow leaf vervain).

June 13, Victoria Glade Conservation Area, Jefferson County—Department of Conservation's Mike Arduser led a large group of 19 over portions of the site's loop trail with cooperation of a sunny, 80° day. Similar to last week, a variety of colors were beheld by the observers, yellow from *Oenothera macrocarpa* (Missouri primrose) and *Verbesina helianthoides* (yellow crownbeard), red supplied by *Castilleja coccinea* (Indian paintbrush), orange by *Asclepias tuberosa* (butterfly weed), purple by *Echinacea simulata* (pale purple coneflower) and lavender blossoms of *Amorpha canescens* (lead plant). Other notable plants seen were *Tephrosia virginiana* (goat's rue), *Stylosanthes biflora* (pencil flower), *Leucospora multifida* (conobea), *Manfreda virginica* (false aloe), *Scleria ciliata* (hairy nut grass), *Juncus torreyi* (Torrey's rush), *J. interior* (inland rush), *Setaria parviflora* (yellow foxtail) and *Fimbristylis puberula* (hairy fimbriistylis). Bill Davit spotted leaves of *Solidago speciosa* (prairie goldenrod) and Father Sullivan found St. John's wort leaf beetles (*Paria sellata*) consuming one of their favorites, *Hypericum sphaerocarpon* (round-fruited St. John's wort).

June 20, St. Francois State Park, St. Francois County—considering the weather's double-90's hex (temperature and humidity), a gathering of nine (including new member Katie Hurrelmeyer) scouting the park's north side fen, wasn't a bad turnout. The best find was a robust and healthy population of grass pink orchids (*Calopogon tuberosa*). However, deer showed no respect for a state listed species (S2-imperiled), by consuming all flowers of *Filipendula rubra* (queen of the prairie). Other species seen included *Melanthium virginicum* (bunch flower), *Apocynum cannabinum* (Indian hemp), *Blephilia ciliata*

(Ohio horse mint), *Swertia caroliniensis* (American columbo), *Tradescantia ohioensis* (Ohio spiderwort), *Verbesina helianthoides* (yellow crownbeard), *Stylosanthes biflora* (pencil flower), *Desmodium glutinosum* (large flower tick clover), *Justicia americana* (water willow) and *Tephrosia virginiana* (goat's rue).

June 27, Marais Temps Clair Conservation Area, St. Charles County—this site is not exactly known for shade and the continuing oppressive weather held the attendance down to six. The balloon-like fruit pods of aptly-named balloon vine (*Cardiospermum halicacabum*) were seen. Flowering plants included *Anemone canadensis* (white anemone), *Arenaria serpyllifolia* (thyme leaf sandwort), *Carduus nutans* (musk thistle), *Fagopyrum esculentum* (common buckwheat), *Phyla lanceolata* (northern fog fruit), *Polygonum convolvulus* (black bindweed), *Potentilla norvegica* (rough cinquefoil), *Salix exigua* (sandbar willow) and *Teucrium canadense* (wood sage). After examining many four-eyed beetles (*Tetraopes tetraophthalmus*) and a small green frog inhabiting common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), Jack Harris discovered a snout butterfly (*Libytheana bachmanii*) basking on a fragrant sumac plant (*Rhus aromatica*).

July 5, Meramec State Park, Franklin County—the year's hottest day, 95°, smoggy and humid, greeted seven faithful, who walked the mostly shaded Natural Wonders Trail. *Lobelia spicata* (spiked lobelia), *Chasmanthium latifolium* (spangle grass) and red fruits of *Hydrastis canadensis* (golden seal) were fairly abundant near Elm Spring Creek. Also seen here were *Circaea lutetiana* (enchanter's nightshade), *Desmodium nudiflorum* (naked flowered tick trefoil), *Silene stellata* (starry campion), *Agrimonia parviflora* (swamp agrimony), *Carex lurida* (sallow sedge), *Cyperus echinatus* (hedgehog club rush), *Juncus marginatus* (grassleaf rush) and *Clematis pitcheri* (leather flower), the latter at a cool cave opening. Pat Harris successfully answered a test on budding *Scutellaria incana* (hoary skullcap). On a small glade were

found *Dalea purpurea* (purple prairie clover) and bright orange *Asclepias tuberosa* (butterfly weed). A nice growth of crown-tipped coral fungus (*Clavicornia pyxidata*) growing on a rotten log was gathered for the pot, but its taste was somewhat bitter.

July 11, Weldon Spring Conservation Area, St. Charles County—threatened showers did not materialize, as a group of 10 endured an 80° humid day, while scouting an old forest road near the Lewis & Clark Trail. Deep purple *Vernonia baldwinii* (Baldwin's ironweed) and sky blue *Campanula americana* (tall bellflower) were numerous in some sections. Among other plants seen were *Verbena stricta* (hoary vervain), *Croton capitatus* (woolly croton), *Monarda fistulosa* (wild bergamot), *Stachys tenuifolia* (thinleaf betony), *Hydrangea arborescens* (wild hydrangea) and *Plantago aristata* (bracted plantain), the latter requiring field keying. Pat Harris continued her flawless record by correctly answering tests on two budding plants, Maximilian sunflower (*Helianthus maximiliani*) and yellow passion flower (*Passiflora lutea*). Jack Harris compared the drooping flowers of *Phryma leptostachya* (lopseed) to a lop-eared dog. Father Sullivan provided an easy method to separate young plants of two similar species, black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) compound leaves are odd-numbered with a terminal leaflet, while wild senna (*Senna marilandica*) has even-numbered leaflets and no terminal leaflet. Many Japanese beetles (*Popillia japonica*) were seen, consuming a variety of different plants.

July 18, Castlewood State Park, St. Louis County—nine persons outlasted another typical hot and humid summer day, while checking out both lowland and forest trails. The tiny exotic, *Mazus pumilus* (annual mazus), was still holding forth in the picnic area near the Meramec River. Several other plants seen were *Aristolochia tomentosa* (woolly pipevine), *Brickellia grandiflora* (tassel flower), *Iresine rhizomatosa* (bloodleaf), fruits of *Ostrya virginiana* (eastern hop hornbeam), *Vernonia baldwinii* (Baldwin's ironweed) and *V. arkansana* (southern iron-

weed); the latter two were contrasted with field keying. Father Sullivan identified an immature sucking insect (*Acanalonia conica*), whose abdomen exudes waxy strands as a protective device against predators.

July 25, Onondaga Cave State Park, Crawford County—more steamy weather held attendance to seven, who walked the Blue Heron Trail and a park road. Unfortunately, last year's crested coral root orchids (*Hexalectris spicata*), were not in evidence. However, along the trail were seen *Silene stellata* (starry campion), *Dasistoma macrophylla* (mullein foxglove), *Matelea decipiens* (climbing milkweed), *Tradescantia subaspera* (broad leaf spiderwort), *Belamcanda chinensis* (blackberry lily), *Rudbeckia subtomentosa* (sweet coneflower) and *Samolus parviflorus* (water pimpernel). Plants found along the road included *Helenium flexuosum* (purple headed sneezeweed), *Polanisia dodecandra* (clammy weed), *Myosotis scorpioides* (forget-me-not) and *Penthorum sedoides* (ditch stonecrop). Also spotted was a black and white stink bug (*Stiretrus anchorago*), which eats beetle larva.

August 1, Surdyke Glade, Jefferson County—a surprisingly large group of 14 (including new member Edith Mertzlufft) endured high humidity and 100° temperature for a shortened walk on this private glade, south of Festus. The tour was led through courtesy of Jerry Price and Dave Shidler of Price Real Estate. Open fields adjacent to the glade sported numerous purple *Vernonia baldwinii* (Baldwin's ironweed). Tiny white flowers of *Hedyotis nigricans* (narrow leaf bluets) and *Heliotropium tenellum* (slender heliotrope), plus yellow *Rudbeckia missouriensis* (Missouri coneflower) were abundant over the glade. Many dried fruit pods of *Oenothera macrocarpa* (Missouri primrose) were seen. Among other interesting plants found were *Linum sulcatum* (grooved flax), *Liatris cylindracea* (cylindric blazing star), *Hypericum sphaerocarpum* (round-fruited St. John's wort), *Bouteloua curtipendula* (sideoats grama grass) and *Asclepias viridiflora* (green milkweed). Father Sullivan

found field dodder (*Cuscuta pentagona*) strangling a Missouri coneflower plant and in nearby woods, Ed Kullman spotted leaves of large twayblade orchid (*Liparis liliifolia*).

August 8, Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, St. Charles County—the weather cooperated with a nice, sunny 80°, as a group of 14, including Pat Grace returning from a long absence, hiked to the end of the Ellis Island road for a nice view of the still-distant dam. Father Sullivan spotted the unusual *Conyza ramosissima* (dwarf fleabane) on the Visitor Center lawn, then later found the tall grass, *Leptochloa panicoides* (Amazon sprangletop) along the river bank. Regardless of the common name, this grass is native and seems to favor large river systems. Abundant along the road were *Chamaecrista fasciculata* (showy partridge pea), *Polanisia dodecandra* (clammy weed) and *Heterotheca latifolia* (camphor weed). Also seen were *Ipomoea lacunosa* (small white morning glory), *Cenchrus longispinus* (sandbur), *Asclepias incarnata* (swamp milkweed), *Spermacoce glabra* (smooth buttonweed), *Croton glandulosus* (sand croton) and *Cycloloma atriplicifolium* (winged pigweed). A marsh near the road's end had nice growths of marsh elder (*Iva annua*) and obedient plant (*Physostegia virginiana*).

August 16, Young Conservation Area, Jefferson County—a pleasant 75° day saw a big crowd of 17, including new participants Aimee & Cindy Wegescheide, walk part of the Taconic Trail, plus exploring a pond. Among plants seen were *Gaura parviflora* (velvety gaura), *Ipomoea pandurata* (wild potato vine), *Salvia azurea* (blue sage), *Calystegia silvatica* (hedge bindweed), *Helianthus mollis* (ashy sunflower), *Agastache nepetoides* (yellow giant hyssop), *Amphicarpaea bracteata* (hog peanut), *Desmodium paniculatum* (tall tickclover) and a nice patch of *Scutellaria incana* (hoary skullcap). Near the La Barque Creek bridge, *Mimulus alatus* (sharpwing monkey flower), *Leucospora multifida* (conobea) and *Eupatorium perfoliatum* (boneset) were found.

August 22, St. Louis Zoo—on a hot, but not unpleasnt day, 12 people examined the Insectarium, then toured the newly-completed Rivers Edge project. All agreed that the Zoo has done a good job of planting natives, some of which seen were *Physostegia virginiana* (obedient plant), *Solidago rigida* (stiff goldenrod), *Asclepias tuberosa* (butterfly weed), *Coreopsis tripteris* (tall tickseed), *Phyla lanceolata* (northern fog fruit), *Lobelia cardinalis* (cardinal flower), *L. siphilitica* (blue cardinal flower), *Pontederia cordata* (pickerel weed), *Rudbeckia laciniata* (goldenglow), *Hibiscus lasiocarpus* (rose mallow), *Strophostyles helvula* (trailing wild bean), *Aralia spinosa* (Hercules' club), *Eryngium yuccifolium* (rattlesnake master), *Polygonum lapathifolium* (pale smartweed), *Silphium perfoliatum* (cup plant), *Tripacum dactyloides* (eastern gama grass) and *Onoclea sensibilis* (sensitive fern).

August 29, Creve Coeur Park, St. Louis County—13 persons, including first-timer Bob Siemer, checked out the Little Creve Coeur Lake mitigation area on a sunny, 85° day. Abundant were *Conyza canadensis* (horse weed), budding *Aster pilosus* (white heath aster), *Setaria parviflora* (knotroot fox-tail), *Polygonum amphibium* (water smartweed), *Eragrostis trichodes* (sand love grass) and *Panicum dichotomiflorum* (fall panic grass). The lake was covered with a spectacular display of large American lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*) leaves and yellow flowers. Some other interesting species seen were *Amaranth hybridus* (green amaranth), *Sida spinosa* (prickly sida), *Acalypha ostryifolia* (horn-beam three-seeded mercury), *Desmodium paniculatum* (panicked tick clover), *Typha angustifolia* (narrow leaf cattail), *Lycopus americana* (American bugleweed), *Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani* (great bulrush), *Verbena bracteata* (creeping vervain) and *Polygonum erectum* (erect knotweed). Passing a huge soybean (*Glycine max*) field, Jeanne Clauson noted that the fruiting pods were extremely hairy. Jack Harris spotted an orb-weaving spider (*Argiope* sp.) contemplating lunch over a trapped clouded sulfur butterfly

(*Colias philodice*). The group was treated to fly-overs by Red Baron biplanes and Blue Angel jets, practicing for the weekend's upcoming air show.

Thanks to Pat & Jack Harris, and Nels Holmberg, for information for this article ☞

## MO Bird Conservation Initiative

Dianne Benjamin

Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative (MoBCI) convened Sat., Dec. 7 in Columbia, MO, to formalize their purpose and organizational structure, and to agree on leadership and project proposals. WGNSS has participated in the forming of this innovative statewide coalition since its beginnings in April, 2000.

The purpose of MoBCI is to collaborate efforts to conserve and restore bird populations and their habitats. An interim Board of Directors will steer MoBCI in its initial task of inviting organizations to join this passionate endeavor. WGNSS is represented on MoBCI's interim Board, along with US Fish & Wildlife, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Department of Conservation, Audubon Missouri, Audubon Society of Missouri, Columbia Audubon Society, Ducks Unlimited, and Missouri Falconers.

Dozens of federal and state government agencies and non-government organizations, who have birds as one of their primary foci, have expressed a high level of commitment in joining MoBCI. Thus Missouri is the first state to go beyond just "networking" and to structure more intense "collaboration" into their purpose.

A critical stimulus for creating MoBCI is North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI). Formed in 1996, NABCI's approach is regionally based, biologically driven, landscape oriented, and seeks dedicated long-term funding. It plans and coordinates bird conservation in the Northern Hemisphere through three nations, Canada, Mexico, and the United States including breeding grounds, wintering grounds, and

migratory pathways. NABCI's website is <http://www.nabci-us.org/>.

NABCI does not implement. It realizes implementation through consultation and recommendations on a regional and national scale. You may be familiar with some of NABCI's results from members like American Bird Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, National Audubon Society, US Fish & Wildlife, US Forest Service, etc. Their joint ventures have given MoBCI a legacy of resources such as Partners in Flight, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, the US Shorebird Conservation Plan, and the N. American Waterbird Conservation Plan.

Even though MoBCI has a wealth of resources available as we create this new structure, we take care to build trust and understanding among our member organizations. We have an unprecedented opportunity to empower ourselves and to make the combined efforts of our organizations more than just the sum of our single organization's achievements ☞

## Winter Bird Feeding

Yvonne Homeyer

This past summer, many birds in our area died from West Nile Virus. Those birds that are wintering here need all the help we can give them this winter, to increase their chances of survival for next year's breeding season. It will be especially important to provide food, so please keep those bird feeders full, especially during very cold temperatures and when there is snow or ice covering the ground ☞

## January 2003 Conservation Report

Yvonne Homeyer

**Proposed cement plant:** This proposed project is attracting national attention, and groups such as National Audubon Society, National Wildlife Federation, Natural Resources Defense Council, Environmental Defense and other national, regional and state organizations around the country have gone on record asking for an Environmental Impact Statement. We are still waiting for the Corps of Engineers to make a decision on whether to prepare an EIS, which would look at the proposed project globally and evaluate all the impacts in an integrated manner. The dates for the hearing on Holcim's mining application for a 100+ year limestone quarry have been changed to February 19-21. The Missouri Dept. of Natural Resources did issue another 401 water quality certification, after the first 401 was overturned by the Clean Water Commission.

**Hydroelectric power plant proposed for Mel Price Lock and Dam:** A private company is requesting permission from FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) to build a hydroelectric power plant near Riverlands. We are still getting information about the proposed power plant and its potential impacts on birds, fish and wildlife ♡.

## Indian Lake Meeting

Yvonne Homeyer

At WGNSS's invitation, the Corps of Engineers made a presentation on Nov. 13 to WGNSS and other groups at Yvonne Homeyer's office concerning a proposed flood control project in the Metro East area. WGNSS had heard that Indian Lake — formerly the Collinsville Golf Course — was part of the project area and wanted to get more information about the impacts to Indian Lake. Debbie Roush, project manager, and Tim George, project biologist, spoke to us. We learned that the scope of the proposed project is wide-ranging, consisting of 9 separate areas stretching from Edwardsville to southern St. Clair County. The approach

taken by the Corps is to control flooding through environmental restoration, wetland enhancement and biodiversity restoration, as well as traditional engineering measures. The plan envisions creating or improving wetlands, bottomland forest, prairie, upland forest, lake habitat, and floodplain streams. Indian Lake, a natural wetlands, would remain as it is.

Yvonne Homeyer, Jim Ziebol, Jack Harris and Kathleen O'Keefe attended for WGNSS. Others present were Jim Holsen, St. Louis Audubon Society, Kathy Andria, American Bottom Conservancy, Jack Norman, Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Dick Worthen, Piasa Palisades Sierra Club. We would like to thank Debbie Roush and Tim George for taking time out of their busy schedule to explain the proposed project to us ♡.

## Nature in the News

Anne McCormack

I hope you saw the page-one article about birds and bird feeding in Wed., December 4's *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. The article by Sara Shipley had a pull-out quote by Yvonne Homeyer, with a by-line of "Webster Groves Nature Study Society." The *Post* also carried a feature article on December 5 (SW-1) about bird feeding. This article was from a news service and not written by a local reporter, which explains why they called the uncommon Red-breasted Nuthatch "common," and skipped the common White-breasted Nuthatch. Too bad they didn't mention WGNSS's book — *Birds of the St. Louis Area—Where and When to Find Them*.

The Webster-Kirkwood Journal of Dec. 4 ran an article on Blackburn Park in Webster, site of the Phoebe Snetsinger Bird Sanctuary. In the 55-paragraph article, only 2 paragraphs mentioned the natural area of the park. ♡

## Next Deadline: Jan. 10

Anne McCormack, 587 Andrews, St. Louis MO 63122-5722 or by e-mail amccormack@stjosephacad.com ♡



## Big Oak Tree SP Safe – For Now

Yvonne Homeyer

The Mo. Dept. of Natural Resources has denied without prejudice a 401-water quality certification that the Corps of Engineers needed in order to proceed with a project in the Bootheel known as the St. John's Bayou-New Madrid Floodway. This project would have eliminated flooding in over 100,000 acres of flood plain and would have destroyed or damaged 18,000 acres of wetlands, by closing off the last opening between the Mississippi and its floodplain in that area. The project would have benefited a dozen or so large landowners who farm in the floodplain. The DNR was concerned that Big Oak Tree State Park would have been irreparably damaged because the project would change the hydrology of the park. The US Fish and Wildlife Service was concerned about the impacts to aquatic resources and wildlife. The Corps of Engineers could redesign the project and request another certification from DNR.

The Bootheel is where the Bachman's Warbler once reigned. It was extirpated from Missouri in the late 1940s when the last of the bottomland forest was cut down. Big Oak Tree State Park is a 1000-acre remnant of that forest but that was not enough to save the Bachman's Warbler, which became extinct in the 1960s ☞

## Busch Breeding Bird Survey

Yvonne Homeyer, Jim Ziebol, Randy Korotev

Once again this past June, WGNSS members volunteered their time to conduct a census of breeding birds at the August A. Busch Conservation Area in St. Charles County, including Lost Valley Trail and Blue Grosbeak Trail in the Weldon Spring Conservation Area. Each volunteer spent several hours on two separate occasions in June counting the birds in an assigned sub-area; e.g., Lakes 3, 4, and 5, or Fallen Oak Trail. This was the first year that the entire territory of Busch CA was surveyed, thanks to the increased number of volunteers. The accompanying chart details the species seen and the number of indi-

viduals of each species counted, starting in 1999. To date, 102 species have been reported — excluding 2 sightings of late migrants. Lost Valley Trail is the only place where Cerulean Warblers are now found; they used to breed in Busch CA but are no longer found there. The Cerulean Warbler has experienced a severe decline of over 70% and is the subject of a Petition to be listed under the Endangered Species Act. "Good" birds included Bald Eagle, American Woodcock, Prairie Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler and Lark Sparrow.

See page 18 for a copy of the results.

Thanks to the 2002 censusers: Connie Alwood, Loy Barber, Torrey Berger, Dennis Bozzay, Mike Grant, Sue Gustafson, Yvonne Homeyer, Paul & Barbara Johnson, Randy Korotev, Scott Marshall, Anne McCormack, Sherry McCowan, Jeannie Moe, Tom Parmeter, Kevin Renick, Bill Rudden, Mike Thelen, Bruce Wetteroth, and Jim Ziebol ☞

## Bluebirds Forever

Pete Winter

On the 2,600 acre Roaring Spring Ranch in Franklin County, we maintain the most ambitious bluebird restoration project in the state of Missouri. A trail of 246 bluebird houses is maintained and patrolled twice weekly throughout the nesting season of the Eastern Bluebird.

The results this 2002 Bluebird nesting season has been the best and most productive we have ever achieved:

fledged successfully into the wild	2,149
Black-capped Chickadees fledged	238
Tree Swallows fledged	86
Flying Squirrel broods	3

Accounts and detailed records are kept of each box and nesting sequence for the benefit of the Mo. Dept. of Conservation ☞

## Tyson Nature Line

Call 314-935-8432 for a summary of the latest bird sightings in the St. Louis area. Please report any unusual birds to Connie Alwood, 314-524-8111 ☞

## Birders of the Entertainment World

Anne McCormack

Bird watchers have not always fared well in TV-land. Miss Jane Hathaway of *The Beverly Hillbillies* comes to mind—fussy, over-educated, kooky, but harmless. Miss Jane set out with her canteen and field guide, dressed in khaki Bermudas. A very different portrayal was Ruth-Anne Miller of *Northern Exposure*, my favorite TV birder. It seems appropriate for *Nature Notes* to mark the passing on November 7 of the woman who portrayed her, **Peg Phillips**. (Nancy Kulp, who played Miss Jane, died in 1991.)

The writers of *Northern Exposure* often created bird stories. There was the episode when Ed Chigliak, as apprentice shaman, cured a young woman who suddenly found that the chattering of chickadees made her dizzy. Once a tourist, while watching a Bald Eagle from a hill, left the ground and began to fly. I've heard there was an episode about the Siberian Tit, but I missed it.

Seventy-ish and widowed, Ruth-Anne ran the grocery store in Cicely—the fictional town inspired by Talkeetna, Alaska. What a great story when Ruth-Anne took off on her vintage motorcycle and joined scary-looking Harley-riders on a tour of Alaskan back roads! Any episode when Ruth-Anne gave a piece of her mind to retired-astronaut Maurice was memorable. Of course, the best was when Ruth-Anne got a hotline, reporting a Rufous-sided Towhee—certainly a rarity for central Alaska. Ed covered the cash register while Ruth-Anne rushed out to meet Holling—owner of The Brick—to get their “lifer.” I would have thought that she seen towhees when she lived in the “states,” but perhaps Ruth-Anne wasn't a birder when she pulled up stakes and moved to “the country” in the early '70s. Holling Vincoeur, of course, was raised in Quebec—the now-Eastern Towhee's range doesn't reach his hometown. I don't want to spoil the re-run—just let me say there is a realistic amount of frustration in the chase.

After retiring from accounting, Peg Phillips began an acting career in her late sixties. She was understated and believable in her portrayal of an independent and energetic lady, and finally gave the birding world some decent press. She was 84.

Some credit Roger Tory Peterson for their interest in birding, but I have to say mine comes from **Eddie Bracken** and the View-Master. The View-Master was a mid-century version of an interactive, educational toy. It looked a bit like binoculars. Insert the wheel of tiny slides, look at a light, and pull down the switch to advance to the next slide.

I bet it was Christmas of 1960 when my cousin Ginny and I each got a View-Master with a wheel-record set called, “Some of My Very Best Friends...Are Birds,” narrated by Eddie Bracken. He is best known from films of the '40s, like *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek*, New York stage roles in *Hello Dolly* and *Sugar Babies*, the '83 *National Lampoon's Vacation*, and in '91, *Home Alone 2*. His voice was cheery, smarmy—perfect for a child's record. I remember looking at the slide of the American Robin and listening to the record play its song. Eddie's narration went, “The robin sings, ‘Cheer-up, cheerily, cheer-up, cheerily.’ Well...I will I guess—gladly!” The record beeped, signaling it was time to click to a new slide. “The Song Sparrow sings, ‘Madge, Madge, put on the tea kettle, Ethel, Ethel.’” Eddie noted that he had never seen a Song Sparrow drink tea and had never met one named Ethel. He didn't mention Madge. “Beep—Here is a very large, very mad, Great Horned Owl. I stayed up all night long waiting for him to hoot.” Alas, the owl never hooted. I remember thinking, “Why didn't he just stay up another night?”

My cousin and I were so enthused about birds, we headed out to the creek in Glasgow Village (north St. Louis County) to find them. The rest—well, you know. Is there any such educational toy inspiring young bird watchers today? Eddie Bracken died on November 14 at the age of 87 ♡.

## The *NewNew* Geographic

Bill Rowe

*National Geographic Society Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, Fourth Edition (2002); Chief Consultant Jon Dunn, Art Consultant and General Consultant Jonathan Alderfer, and Map Consultant Paul Lehman.

This will be a short review. The Fourth Edition just issued by National Geographic counts more as a revision than as a truly new edition — much less new, in fact, than the third edition of 1999, which offered 35 completely repainted plates plus new figures on dozens of others, a set of thoroughly revamped range maps, and a rewrite of the text descriptions for a great many species (see my review in *Nature Notes*, September 1999). The publishers seem to have caught on belatedly to the publicity value of these improvements; they have made up for lost time with a fourth-edition ad campaign, complete with advance mailing of a colorful flyer, and they have given the book a cool new cover, with a black background instead of a white one. But the claim of “Fully revised and updated,” emblazoned on the front, is based on just seven new plates, plus some additions, retouches, and map or text adjustments. It’s been revised and updated, all right, but the “fully” part is a stretch.

That said, the updates and revisions, especially the plates, do constitute an improvement. Perusing our newly-purchased volume—of course we bought one — who can resist a new field guide?— we see that the names and taxonomy in “NGS4” are mostly up to the minute, incorporating changes proclaimed by the American Ornithologists’ Union’s “checklist committee” in 2000 and 2002. Most of the changes, such as splits of familiar forms and name alterations, were simple enough to manage. So we now see the illustration of Dark-rumped Petrel relabeled as Hawaiian Petrel (which arose, along with Galapagos Petrel, from a two-for-one split of Dark-rumped); we see the Gunnison Sage-Grouse illustrated with a new picture and described in the text; we see Wilson’s Snipe, the

American form, split from the Common Snipe of Eurasia, and the Black-crested Titmouse of Texas split from the Tufted Titmouse (in both cases, the two forms were already illustrated).

Recent English name changes have been incorporated, too: Long-tailed Duck (for Oldsquaw), Eared Quetzal (for Eared Trogon), Arizona Woodpecker (for Strickland’s Woodpecker), and Western Spindalis (for Stripe-headed Tanager). Changes in scientific names are a little shakier. The most interesting, such as the merging of the Blue Grosbeak from its own monotypic genus *Guiraca* into the bunting genus *Passerina*, or the change in the Black-billed Magpie’s name to reflect its split from the Magpie of the Old World, made it in, but other more obscure changes did not (reassignment of Roseate Spoonbill to a different genus, spelling changes in names for Purple Gallinule and Red Phalarope). One real blunder slipped through: the split of the snipe, clearly stated in the English names, got lost in the scientific names, so both species are called *Gallinago gallinago*! (For the record, Wilson’s Snipe should be *Gallinago delicata*.)

OK, that’s enough of nitpicking nomenclature. What about the more important stuff — the maps, text, and pictures? Well, the first two can be dispensed with quickly, since the novelties are few. A handful of species that previously had no map have been given one: Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, Bridled and Sooty Terns, Black-crested Titmouse, Olive Sparrow, and Eurasian Tree Sparrow; the ETS’s map even shows the recent range extension up into Iowa. Some resident species that deserve maps still don’t have them (Green Jay springs to mind), along with dozens of vagrant and irregular birds that more properly can do without them. Otherwise, certain maps betray signs of adjustment (a bit of color added here or removed there), but the majority remain the same — which makes sense, since they were given a thorough overhaul just a few years ago and are still very good for the most part. The text has been touched even more sparingly, and

mostly when taxonomy required it (e.g., new entries for the snipe and the titmouse).

The only substantial change in NGS4 is the new artwork. Of the seven plates that are fully redone, five showcase the work of Jonathan Alderfer. Replacing earlier plates by other artists, he depicts the following groups: (1) four Pacific-coast shearwaters (Pink-footed, Black-vented, Buller's, Streaked); (2) four cormorants (Double-crested, Brandt's, Pelagic, Red-faced); (3) the world's four godwit species; (4) four small auklets (Parakeet, Crested, Whiskered, Least); and (5) four yellow kingbirds (Western, Cassin's, Couch's, Tropical). All five plates are of the highest quality, with handsome, near-photographic realism and a profusion of poses in flight, perched, on the water, etc. It is especially nice to have well-portrayed Double-crested Cormorants that include several smaller figures to show variation by age and geography, and to have the handsome series of godwits all lined up on their plate for easy comparisons (with a figure of a spring female Hudsonian, not so very different from a Marbled). The kingbird plate, too, is a major improvement over the previous one; the figures now look like real kingbirds. In addition, Alderfer contributes a few figures to existing plates: displaying male Greater and Gunnison Sage-Grouse and Sharp-tailed Grouse on one page, a truer version of the Rose-throated Becard on another. Here we see this artist at the top of his form, with equal measures of accuracy, utility, and beauty on each plate; too bad he couldn't just redo a whole lot more while he was at it!

The two other brand-new plates are the bitterns and night-herons, by Peter Burke—a nice job, although who knows why they wanted to replace this one ahead of many others that need it more—and the Yellow Warbler and *Oporornis* warblers, by Thomas Schultz—an excellent replacement. Otherwise, I could see only that the juvenile Northern Harrier had changed color—but the illustration was poor before and remains that way—and that the juvenile Black-necked Stilt has become brown instead of

black above, to match what the text says. The rest of the plates are those of the third edition, which range from outstandingly successful to merely OK — the latter mainly some holdovers from the first edition that have apparently never been slated for replacement. It is this unevenness that still prevents the book from being a truly outstanding field guide for intermediate and advanced birders, although it is moving in that direction. The new plates in NGS4 do keep its progress in motion, and give us hope that some day it will be a match for a book like Princeton University Press's *Birds of Europe*, by Svenson and Grant, illustrated by Mullarney and Zetterstrom—a superb guide that manages to present uniformly great illustrations and an absolute ton of information, all in a package of about the same dimensions and weight as NGS.

How does NGS4 stack up against our other American guides? As I've noted before, NGS has never been a beginners' guide, which should have a clear emphasis on the most fundamental points and not too much fuss about the subtleties, the more complex problems, or the vagrants. This role is filled by Kaufmann's *Focus Guide*, Peterson's fifth edition of his *Eastern Birds*, and also perhaps the American Bird Conservancy's *All the Birds*, each of which has its virtues and its faults. On balance, I recommend Kaufmann as a first guide, but it doesn't hurt for a new birder to own all three. NGS does attempt the more complex coverage, often without highlighting the basics very clearly, and that makes it dense; so it doesn't really compete with the beginning guides. Nor, on the other hand, does it compete with specialty books like Grant's *Gulls* or Olson's *Skuas and Jaegers* or Dunn and Garrett's *Warblers* or ...you name it. There is no way to condense detailed material like that into one guide covering all groups, although NGS does try to outline a lot of the identification points for the more difficult species. Clearly it is meant for birders who already have a decent knowledge base; it gives them a quick rundown of the important points for each bird.

And what about the *Sibley Guide*? That would be the obvious competitor, except for the fact that Sibley is simply not a true *field* guide, whether or not somebody now manufactures a pocket big enough to hold it. In terms of content and quality, this is not the place for a review of Sibley, but I do have a couple of observations relevant to NGS. While Sibley is a real *tour de force* of bird painting, and probably the best available treatment for some species and some groups, it is not without its own problems, and it does not obliterate NGS as an important intermediate/advanced guide. In some cases, taking plates and text together, NGS does a better job than the pictures-plus-notes system that Sibley employs. And, at this point, its range maps are far superior, although Sibley is far more thorough on voice descriptions. The obvious solution is to own both, and use both when trying to figure out any difficult problem, with NGS being the one you can comfortably carry around and flip through in the field. This issue of portability may change when the new separate east and west Sibley volumes appear next year, and the maps may improve; but there will still be plenty of need for National Geographic, especially in this improved new incarnation as NGS4 ♡.

## MO Bird Records Committee News

Bill Rowe

**Membership:** The Mo. Bird Records Committee held its annual meeting on Oct. 5, 2002, at Lake of the Ozarks, in conjunction with the fall meeting of the ASM. There were two positions open for election; these were filled by the reelection of Bill Goodge and Brad Jacobs, both of Columbia. No new nominations were submitted to the Secretary.

**Top ten for 2001:** As one of its more enjoyable duties, the Committee is charged with choosing and rank-ordering the top ten bird records in the state each year. See the article in the *Bluebird* for the "year 2001" list, which was also announced at the fall meeting. In addition, it can be found on line at [www.mobirds.org](http://www.mobirds.org).

**Seasonal editors:** Paul McKenzie served as temporary summer editor for '02, and Andy Forbes of Columbia has agreed to take over the summer seasonal report for '03. Andy is the Director of Bird Conservation for the Mo. Dept. of Conservation; his office will be in the Audubon Mo. office in Columbia.

All birders are reminded that their seasonal notes are due to the editor by the 10th of the month just after the season has ended: December 10 for fall, March 10 for winter, June 10 for spring, and August 10 for summer. The name and address of each editor can be found in every issue of the *Bluebird*; birders who wish to submit seasonal notes but are not members of the Audubon Society of Missouri can call Bill Rowe at 314-843-4151 to get the name and address.

**Two levels of documentation (all observers please read):** If you are reporting a species that is listed as "casual" or "accidental" for the season (or not listed at all) in the Annotated Check-list of Missouri Birds, then you should write up a full documentation of your sighting and send it to the Mo. Bird Records Committee, c/o Bill Rowe, 9033 Big Bend, St. Louis, MO 63119. The form can be found on line at [www.mobirds.org](http://www.mobirds.org).

If your bird is listed only as "rare," you should *not* send documentation to the Records Committee; instead you should provide some descriptive details in your seasonal report to explain how you made the identification. A number of birds in the "rare" category can be tricky to identify, and the editor will appreciate your efforts to make it clear that you had a solid, positive ID. For instance, if you observe an immature N. Goshawk, your notes will give the date and location, and you might also add: "Large, bulky accipiter, about size of nearby Red-tail; noted heavy streaking on breast and belly and dark spots on undertail coverts." This falls short of a complete documentation, but it provides reassurance that you knew what to look for and that the bird was indeed a Goshawk and not just a large Cooper's Hawk. The editor can then include it with confidence in his seasonal report and forward

it with confidence to the regional editor for *North American Birds*.

### Status decisions on certain species:

*White-rumped Sandpiper*: We repeat our request for all Mo. observers to send us documentation of any Mo. sighting of *White-rumped Sandpiper in fall migration*, including past years. Photographs would obviously be most desirable, but, failing that, good written details that clearly distinguish the bird(s) as White-rumps will be welcome. Please submit any records from years past that you can substantiate with descriptive notes written at the time—not just from memory!—about size, shape, plumage, and/or voice. We will review these in an effort to clarify the true status of this species in fall. In the past year we have reviewed only one acceptable report, and that was one we were already aware of (documentation and photograph were submitted). It would seem that this species is no more than casual in Missouri in the fall, but we await further input by observers.

*Western Kingbird*: This species now appears to nest in small numbers in many parts of Missouri; it also occurs as a transient. Its status should be considered "rare" statewide rather than "casual." This means that observations of Western Kingbirds, whether nesting or not, do not require review by the Committee as long as they fall within the species' known period of occurrence—mid-April to early October. As with any species, a record that falls outside these dates should still be documented. Additionally, all Mo. birders should be aware that a kingbird with yellow underparts is not necessarily a Western. Check carefully for the possibility of a vagrant Cassin's Kingbird from the west—perhaps most likely in fall—or a vagrant Tropical or Couch's Kingbird from Texas or south of the border—possible in fall but also in May or June.

*American Pipit*: In recent years this species has proved to be regular in winter in southeast Mo.—many Christmas Bird Count records—and therefore will no longer need documentation there ☞

## November 2002 Bird Report

Jim Ziebol & Yvonne Homeyer

BCA = Busch Wildlife Area

CL = Carlyle Lake

FP = Forest Park

HL = Horseshoe Lake

LCCL = Little Creve Coeur Lake

LVT = Lost Valley Trail

MTC = Marais Temps Clair

REDA = Riverlands Env. Demonstration Area

TGP = Tower Grove Park

*Sightings*: A Common Loon and a Red-throated Loon were seen at REDA on 11/2 (DB, Saturday Group) as well as on 11/24 (MAA, Sunday Group). Western Grebes were observed at REDA on 11/9 (DR) and one was seen on Creve Coeur Lake on 11/11 (Leslie Koller). Eared Grebes were reported at the O'Fallon, Ill., Sewage Lagoon on 11/9 (DK), at REDA on 11/17 (P&BJ), and at Creve Coeur Lake on 11/19 (IH). By 11/5, 1000+ Pelicans were present at HL. Torrey Berger found 33 Great Blue Herons, 18 Buffleheads, and 700 Crows at HL on 11/25. At Busch on 11/17, Paul Bauer had Green Heron—a very late date—and White-fronted Goose. On 11/2, Mike Thelen observed a late Great Egret and 2 E. Phoebes at REDA. Early on 11/29, a Sandhill Crane was observed flying at REDA (JU). Two Tundra Swans were found in a flock of up to 28 Trumpeters at REDA starting on 11/10 (DR, MAA). Charlene Malone located a Ross' Goose at REDA on 11/4. Scoter sightings included a Black Scoter at the O'Fallon Sewage Lagoon on 11/9 (DK), 10+ Surf Scoters at REDA (m. ob.), a White-winged Scoter at Creve Coeur Lake on 11/2 (CM, MG), on 11/3 (G&TB), and on 11/15 (IH), and a Black Scoter at Fountain Lakes City Park in St. Charles Co. on 11/30 (DR). Jeannie Moe counted 39 Buffleheads at REDA on 11/14. Torrey Berger reported 500+ Ruddy Ducks, 24 Am. Widgeons, and other ducks at HL on 11/11. The high count for Hooded Merganser was 70 at REDA on 11/15 (FH). On 11/2, Charlene Malone found a Lesser Yellowlegs and 6 Snipe on Hwy. H in St. Charles County. Another Lesser Yellowlegs was

found on the Levee Road (Monroe Co., IL) on 11/8 (JZ). On 11/17, 7 Snipe were still present at BCA (YH). Josh Uffman counted 23 peeps, 3 of which were Least Sandpipers, at Winfield Dam on 11/29. The Little Gull at CL, first seen in October, was re-located on 11/9 (DK) and on 11/30 (CM). David Becher reported thousands of Bonaparte's Gulls at CL on 11/29.

A Turkey Vulture was seen on 11/27 near Alton (FH). Golden Eagles were observed on the Levee Road on 11/8 (JZ), near the Brussels Ferry on 11/18 (CM), at Stump Lake on 11/19 (DC), and at Clarence Cannon on 11/24 (SS). On 11/16, 9 Bald Eagles and 4 Red-tailed Hawks were seen in active migration at LCCL (JZ, YH). The Malones saw a dark morph Western Red-tailed Hawk on I-64 on 11/10 and Charlene reported a Harlan's Hawk on Portage Road on 11/14. Dave Rogles observed a dark morph Rough-legged Hawk on Hwy. V in St. Charles Co. on 11/5. Another Rough-legged Hawk was seen perched at Clarence Cannon on 11/29 (JU). On 11/17, a Harlan's Hawk, a dark morph Western Red-tail, 2 partial albino Red-tailed Hawks, and 2 Cooper's Hawks were found on the Levee Road (YH, JZ). Falcon sightings included a Merlin at REDA on 11/9 (DC), a Merlin at Winfield Dam on 11/24 (SS), and a Peregrine Falcon at REDA on 11/21 (Thursday Group). The Saturday Group found 3 Short-eared Owls at REDA on 11/2. Lanny Chambers banded a Ruby-throated Hummingbird at the St. Louis County home of Patty & Bob Murray on 11/21. A group of 15+ Eurasian Collared Doves present on Payne Road, St. Charles Co. was seen by several people (CM, Thursday Group, G&TB). A very late Yellow-billed Cuckoo was found at Castlewood SP on 11/2 (MM). Late swallow sightings included Tree Swallows at REDA and HL on 11/15 (FH) and 1 Tree and 1 Barn Swallow at REDA on 11/18 (J&CM). Two Palm Warblers were a good find at LCCL on 11/11 (Leslie Koller). On 11/3 at LCCL, the Sunday Group, led by Torrey Berger, found 11 sparrow species, including Harris'. Rusty Blackbirds were found in small numbers at REDA on 11/9 (MT), on Pleasant

Union Road on 11/10 (DB, Saturday Group) and on 11/24 at REDA (YH). A large flock of Lapland Longspurs was present at CL on 11/29 north of Tamalco (DB).

A typical day at LCCL on 11/1 included 3 Great Blue Herons, N. Shoveler, Wood Duck, Blue & Green-winged Teal, Gadwall, Mallard, Widgeon, 2 N. Harriers, 2 Cooper's Hawks, 2 Red-tails, 2 Kestrels, a Prairie Falcon, 6 Bobwhite, 5 Killdeer, 4 Ring-billed Gulls, 100+ Mourning Doves, 12 Tree Swallows, Carolina Wren, 2 Am. Tree Sparrows, 8 Field Sparrows, 2 Vesper Sparrows, 30 Savannah Sparrows, 7 Fox Sparrows, 10 Song Sparrows, 50+ Swamp Sparrows, 12 White-throated Sparrows, 25 White-crowned Sparrows, 1 Harris' Sparrow, 12 Eurasian Tree Sparrows, and more (TB). A typical day at REDA on 11/9 included Common Loon, W. Grebe, Trumpeter & Tundra Swans, Surf Scoters, White-winged Scoter, Barn Swallow, and a Rusty Blackbird (MT).

*Comments:* A Savannah Sparrow was a very unusual backyard bird at the home of Jim Ziebol on 11/17. A Barred Owl was seen at Mike Brady's home on 11/6. Jane Zatta photographed a Sharp-shinned Hawk in her backyard. On 11/23, another Sharp-shin flew over Mike Thelen's home. Mary Anne Auer has been hearing Screech Owls in her neighborhood and Mike Thelen has heard dueting Great Horned Owls near his home. Margy Terpstra had a Cooper's Hawk mantling over its kill at her home on 11/26; to date, she has seen it eating 2 Cardinals, a chipmunk and a Flicker. A Winter Wren was seen at Mike Brady's suet feeder on 11/27. There have been several partial albinos or leucistic birds seen recently. A leucistic Ruddy Duck was seen at HL in October. Two beautiful partial-albino Red-tails have been seen on the Levee Road; one is about 75% white and the other is over 90% white. An albino Turkey was seen at REDA (FH) and Jack Harris found a leucistic Mourning Dove at his feeder. Jack also reported a partial-albino Chickadee at his home in the winter of 1994-95. Albinism is very rare in Chickadees.



Contributors: Mary Anne Auer, George & Terry Barker, David Becher, Torrey Berger, Mike Brady, Dick Coles, Mike Grant, Frank Holmes, Yvonne Homeyer, Ian Hunt, Dan Kassebaum, Jim & Charlene Malone, Sherry McCowan, Mark Mittleman, Jeannie Moe, David Rogles, Scott Schuette, Margy Terpstra, Mike Thelen, Josh Uffman, Jim Ziebol. An asterisk means "documented." Please submit sightings by the last day of the month to Jim Ziebol (314-781-7372) or Yvonne Homeyer [homeyer@earthlink.net](mailto:homeyer@earthlink.net) ☞

## Next Deadline: Jan. 10

Submissions—handwritten or typed, e-mail, IBM or Mac to: Anne McCormack, 587 Andrews, St. Louis MO 63122-5722 or [amccormack@stjosephacad.com](mailto:amccormack@stjosephacad.com) ☞

## Science Seminars from St. Louis

### Zoo & Academy of Science

All seminars will be held in the Living World (North side of Zoo, free parking in North Lot) Wednesday evenings, 7:30–9:00 PM. Free — making science accessible to all people. Co-sponsored by the Saint L. Zoo and the Academy of Science of St. Louis.

January 15, 2003 "Current Genomic Research and its Applications to Cancer," Janet S. Rader, M.D. Associate Professor, Genetics and Obstetrics and Gynecology Washington University School of Medicine.

February 12 "Global Warming: the Greenhouse Effect," Carl Bender, Professor of Physics, Washington University ☞

## Nature Notes Deadlines & Mailings

Oak Bend Library, 842 S. Holmes Kirkwood

<i>mailing party</i>		<i>NN deadline</i>
Tues. 1/21, 2003 10–1		Fri. 1/10/03
Tues. 2/18, 12–3		Fri. 2/7
Mon. 3/17 10–1		Fri. 3/7
Mon. 4/21 10–1		Fri. 4/11
Mon. 5/19 10–1		Fri. 3/7
Mon. 8/18 ?		Fri. 8/8

## ☞ Key to WGNSS Calendar

### *birding field trip*

each Thurs. 8:30 AM— call Jackie Chain 314-664-5998

most Sat. 8 AM (not June or July):

call David Becher 314-576-1146

most Sundays: call Kent Lannert 618-624-4464

### *summary of the latest bird sightings*

Call Tyson Nature Line: 314-935-8432

### *to report a bird sighting*

To include a sighting on the "Nature Line" phone message, call Connie Alwood, 314-524-8111. To submit a report to the *Nature Notes* bird column, call Jim Ziebol at 314-781-7372 or email Yvonne at [homeyer@earthlink.net](mailto:homeyer@earthlink.net) by the last day of the month.

### *board meeting*

1st Wed. 7 PM Sept.–May at Powder Valley:

Yvonne Homeyer 314-963-7750

### *botany field trip*

each Thurs: call Fr. Sullivan 314-291-7885

### *conservation meeting*

3rd Wed: call Yvonne Homeyer 314-963-7750

### *entomology meeting*

last Sun: call Marshall Magner 314-961-4588

### *general meeting*

7:30 PM Mike Flieg 314-645-3356

### *mailing party for Nature Notes*

3rd Mon. (not June/July) 10 AM:

call Margie Richardson 314-965-8974

### *spring banquet*

Thursday May 8 at Eden Seminary in

Webster. Pat McCormick 636-225-0264

### *Big Day birding competition* May 10

### *Nature Notes deadlines*

10 days prior to 3<sup>rd</sup> Mon: call Anne

McCormack 314-965-8091

[amccormack@stjosephacad.com](mailto:amccormack@stjosephacad.com)

### *membership expires/renewal due*

Aug. 31

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## **Webster Groves Nature Study Society**

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☞

## **2002-2003 WGNSS Board**

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# Breeding Bird Survey, Busch Conservation Area

including Blue Grosbeak & Lost Valley Trails

Species      1999      2000      2001      2002      1999      2000      2001      2002

Great Blue Heron	3	29	28	39	Red-headed Woodpecker	0	3	5	3
Great Egret	1	6	1	0	Red-bellied Woodpecker	25	47	43	46
Green Heron	12	24	22	28	Downy Woodpecker	10	37	31	28
Little Blue Heron	0	6	0	0	Hairy Woodpecker	2	1	2	1
Turkey Vulture	4	5	17	13	Northern Flicker	10	5	12	11
Canada Goose	36	111	87	142	Pileated Woodpecker	5	9	12	8
Wood Duck	25	20	22	20	Eastern Wood-Pewee	24	35	34	53
Mallard	19	31	24	6	Acadian Flycatcher	12	15	34	38
Bald Eagle	0	0	0	1	Willow Flycatcher	1	0	3	2
Cooper's Hawk	4	0	0	1	Eastern Phoebe	22	30	21	21
Red-shouldered Hawk	0	2	2	3	Great-crested Flycatcher	21	36	33	24
Red-tailed Hawk	7	16	16	24	Eastern Kingbird	42	50	48	50
Kestrel	0	1	0	5	White-eyed Vireo	31	53	45	61
Wild Turkey	0	2	5	5	Bell's Vireo	3	1	7	9
Northern Bobwhite	20	27	28	17	Yellow-throated Vireo	3	3	7	7
Killdeer	13	11	9	5	Warbling Vireo	85	57	80	76
Woodcock	1	0	0	1	Red-eyed Vireo	12	34	26	34
Rock Dove	0	2	25	0	Blue Jay	30	32	54	48
Mourning Dove	49	52	60	66	American Crow	30	63	63	54
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	10	13	10	29	Fish Crow	0	0	2	9
Great Horned Owl	0	1	0	0	Purple Martin	4	17	8	9
Barred Owl	2	3	5	3	Tree Swallow	18	37	35	40
Eastern Screech Owl	0	0	2	0	N.Rough-winged Sw.	12	6	10	9
Chimney Swift	5	0	29	14	Bank Swallow	0	4	5	5
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	6	15	4	15	Cliff Swallow	0	0	12	2
Belted Kingfisher	4	4	2	1	Barn Swallow	24	42	96	61

Species	1999	2000	2001	2002	1999	2000	2001	2002	
Carolina Chickadee	0	0	13	0	Yellow-breasted Chat	43	74	58	91
Black-capped Chickadee	0	0	29	0	Summer Tanager	5	15	6	11
Chickadee sp.	11	54	42	34	Scarlet Tanager	3	5	8	4
Tufted Titmouse	23	33	60	69	Eastern Towhee	32	71	86	106
White-breasted Nuthatch	9	22	26	27	Chipping Sparrow	3	2	0	3
Carolina Wren	9	25	20	20	Field Sparrow	75	63	93	121
House Wren	16	33	21	33	Lark Sparrow	1	0	0	2
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	30	75	71	45	Song Sparrow	20	10	17	17
Eastern Bluebird	16	38	35	29	N. Cardinal	94	143	144	189
Wood Thrush	13	29	21	36	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	39	33	13	20
American Robin	56	69	74	69	Blue Grosbeak	0	1	1	0
Gray Catbird	35	77	67	76	Indigo Bunting	130	181	147	235
Northern Mockingbird	0	1	6	13	Dickcissel	0	6	2	0
Brown Thrasher	26	28	12	42	Red-winged Blackbird	151	177	167	235
Starling	28	0	35	79	Eastern Meadowlark	1	0	0	4
Cedar Waxwing	14	15	13	27	Common Grackle	46	44	84	84
Blue-winged Warbler	10	19	27	11	Brown-headed Cowbird	36	75	88	49
N. Parula	16	33	36	42	Orchard Oriole	29	50	39	44
Yellow Warbler	66	50	56	58	Baltimore Oriole	32	31	28	36
Yellow-throated Warbler	2	1	8	5	House Finch	0	6	2	5
Prairie Warbler	0	0	0	1	American Goldfinch	69	77	117	117
Cerulean Warbler	10 LVT only	10 LVT only	2 LVT only	2 LVT only	House Sparrow	0	0	6	3
Black-and-white Warbler	2	1	1	2	Migratory Birds Observed (not breeding):				
Worm-eating Warbler	8	7	5	6	Mourning Warbler	1999	1		
Ovenbird	1	6	5	8	Alder Flycatcher	1999	1		
Louisiana Waterthrush	8	14	7	2					
Kentucky Warbler	22	38	33	40					
Common Yellowthroat	83	118	144	164					
Hooded Warbler	0	0	1	0					

## The Darkling Thrush

I leant upon a coppice gate  
When Frost was specter-gray  
And Winter's dregs made desolate  
The Weakening eye of day.  
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky  
Like string of broken lyres,  
And all mankind that haunted night  
Had sought their household fires.  
The land's sharp features seemed to be  
The Century's corpse outleant,  
His crypt the cloudy canopy,  
The wind his death-lament.  
The ancient pulse of germ and birth  
Was shrunken hard and dry,  
And every spirit upon earth  
Seemed fervorless as I.  
At once a voice arose among  
The bleak twigs overhead  
In a full-hearted evensong  
Of joy illimited;  
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,  
In blast-beruffled plume,  
Had chosen thus to fling his soul  
Upon the growing gloom.  
So little cause for carolings  
Of such ecstatic sound  
Was written on terrestrial things  
Afar or nigh around,  
That I could think there trembled through  
His happy good-night air  
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew  
And I was unaware.

*Thomas Hardy December 31, 1877*

# Webster Groves Nature Study Society

## Meetings

### Wednesday January 8

7 PM Board meeting at Powder Valley Nature Center. All members are welcome.

### Thursday January 16

7 PM Walter Liddell will do a slide presentation entitled "Bird Images of Southeast Asia" at the St. Louis Co. Library HQ on Lindbergh Blvd. in Frontenac.

## Botany

### Thursdays November–January

Field trips usually meet 9:30 AM. Beginners welcome. Bring lunch, weather gear. Trip is usually 3–5 hr. plus travel time. Call Fr. Sullivan 291-7885 after 1 PM Wed for location. E-mail is sent every Wed. advising when and where the field trip is scheduled. To receive, send your e-mail address to Jack Harris jahar@mac.com

## Entomology

### Sunday December 29

7 PM at Magners', 516 Bacon Ave., Webster, 314-961-4588. Fr. Jim Sullivan will tell us about, "A *Heliopsis* Bug Discovered in Missouri."

### Sunday January 2

7 PM at Magners' above. Topic to be announced.

## Quin Quess

Send \$20 to Randy Korotev, 800 Oakbrook Ln., St. Louis MO 63132



[www.wgnss.org](http://www.wgnss.org)

**Nature Notes deadline Jan. 10**

## Birding

### Thursdays December–January

8:30 AM Des Peres Park on Ballas, one block n. of Manchester. Questions: call Jackie Chain, 314-644-5998.

### Saturday Dec. 7

8 AM WGNSS "Where the Birds Are." Parking lot of HQ of Co. Library, Lindbergh, south of 40. Meet on N side. Bring lunch. David Becher 314-576-1146.

### Saturday December 28

6 AM Mingo NWR Christmas Bird Count. Meet at Mel's Diner in Puxico. For directions, call Paul Bauer 314-921-3972.

### Wednesday January 1

8 AM The Orchard Farm Christmas Bird Count. If you would like to participate, contact Randy Korotev at 314-993-0055 or rlk@levee.wustl.edu \$5

### Saturday January 4

8:00 AM Busch/Weldon Spring Christmas Bird count. Meet at Busch Headquarters. Bring a lunch. For details, call Tom Parmeter, 314-921-6017 or e-mail TKSP@aol.com \$5

### Sunday January 5

8 AM Bird walk at Busch CA. Meet at Headquarters. Led by Rose Ann Bodman & Jackie Chain.

### Sunday January 12

9 AM Bird walk with St. L. Audubon at Forest 44/Tyson.

### Sunday January 19 & February 9

8 AM Bird walk at Carlyle Lake, Ill. Meet at Carlyle McDonald's. Led by Dan Kassebaum.

### Sunday January 26 & February 2 & 23

8 AM Bird walk at Riverlands. Led by Torrey Berger on 1/26/03—meet at Headquarters, Mike Thelen on 2/2—meet at HQ, Joe Eades 2/23—meet at Teal Pond.

### Sunday February 16

9 AM with St. L. Audubon at Baldwin Lk.

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*Webster Groves Nature Study Society*

## Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_ fax ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Membership categories (circle one):  
Individual or Household:.....\$20  
for 1st class mail .....add \$8  
Student.....\$10

Please mail this form with check to:  
Treasurer: Randy Korotev,  
800 Oakbrook Ln., St. Louis MO 63132

Please make check payable to: Webster  
Groves Nature Study Society