Ted McRae to speak at
April General Meeting

Doug Corbett

Please join us Fri., April 14 at 8:00 PM at the St. Louis County Library Headquarters. Our speaker will be WGNSS member entomologist Ted McRae who will share with us his natural history expedition to South Africa. It will include botany, natural history, and entomology. Ted got an exclusive behind the scenes tour of the Broom Room of the Transvaal Museum where he viewed the famous hominid skull collection, including the famous “Mrs. Ples.” Be sure to join us for this most informative and interesting talk!  

Officer Elections

Sue Gustafson

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present the following slate of officers:

President: David Rabenau
1st Vice President: Doug Corbett
2nd Vice President: Pat McCormick

The slate was presented at the March general meeting, and the officers will be elected at the April general meeting. In addition, the WGNSS board has regretfully accepted the resignation of our Secretary, Dora Gianoulakis. Dora has accepted the position of President of her newly formed neighborhood association and will not be able to continue her duties as our secretary.

80th Anniversary Dinner

You are invited to help us remember 80 years and cheer us on to 80 more. Join us at the Eden Commons, Eden Seminary in Webster Groves on May 4, 2000 at 5:30. Dinner will follow at 6:45 PM with our guest speaker Ron Goellner at 8:00 PM.

We need a couple of volunteers too, so if you want to look important and be important call Vicki Flier to volunteer. 968-9166.

Make checks payable to WGNSS for $13 per person. Along with your name, mail to: Vicki Flier, 18 Algonquin Wood, Glendale, MO 63122-2013.

Name__________________________

Name__________________________
Wgnss officers cont. from p. 1
Dora has done an excellent job in expanding and administering the record keeping of our organization; we thank her for all her hard work and wish her the best in her new role where we know she will be extremely effective! We are pleased to announce that Jeannie Moe has agreed to fill Dora’s unexpired term as Secretary. A big thank you to these members for their interest and dedication. The WGNSS board looks forward to their participation! ~

Get On-line with WGNSS
Botany Group
The WGNSS Botany Group conducts field trips in the greater St. Louis vicinity every Thursday (hours usually about 9–3) except for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and occasionally in the case of intolerable weather (a little rain or snow doesn’t count). An e-mail message is sent every Wednesday advising when and where the field trip is scheduled to convene the next day. If anyone would like to receive the weekly Botany Group e-mail message, they can send their e-mail address to Jack Harris at Jahar@stlnet.com and merely state: Add this address to WGNSS-Botany Group field trip list. ~

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Butterfly Update
Father James Sullivan
In the February 2000 Nature Notes “Fall Botanizing” article, we spoke of seeing the Missouri Woodland Swallowtail at Greensfelder County Park. This butterfly (Papilio joanae) is distinguishable from the Black Swallowtail (Papilio polyxenes asterius) by careful study.

On this occasion, we presumed that the butterfly was joanae because we were in the woodsiest of all St. Louis County parks, and woods is what joanae likes. This presumption was not a good one! Papilio joanae was found at Greensfelder County Park once (April 1978), but the Black Swallowtail had been seen there on several occasions.

Phil Koenig suggested that our November 18 sighting was probably a Black Swallowtail, who thought he was in open land since the leaves were down from the trees and lots of sunlight was getting through.

Thanks to Phil Koenig and Richard Heitzman for the above information. ~

Special Request
We need a Bobcat—a small bulldozer—to help create a pond in Tower Grove Park as a memorial to Jack Van Benthuysen. Can anyone donate the use of this equipment? Contact Mike Fleig 645-3356, or Jim Ziebol 781-7372. ~

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~
Get Connected To The Earth With Audubon

Vicki Flier

Help celebrate our common interest in this wonderful planet by becoming a volunteer for the 30th Anniversary of Earth Day at the St. Louis Earth Day 2000. This year Earth Day will focus on the interconnectedness of life on earth and feature multi-faceted programs that will appeal to any member of our diverse community.

Volunteers are needed for many of the events. Some activities include helping children make masks and costumes at the Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis Zoo, or St. Louis Science Center, or in school classrooms. Adults can help by being a marshal for the All Species Parade or the Run For The Earth. Adults and children can help restore forest and grassland by planting at George Winter County Park, Creve Coeur Park, Route 66 State Park, Forest Park or help clean up and plant at the Scott Joplin House. You can be an usher at The Missouri Historical Society’s environmental play The Brick Yard.

We also need a lot of help with events related to Inter Migratory Bird Week. You can help at St. Louis Zoo for “Birds in Peril Education Day” on May 6, 2000. We need 15 people for the education day, where we will have separate education areas set up. And at the MO Botanical Garden, we will have a “Garden for the Birds” booth on May 13, 2000, where we will need 6 people for that event. If you have volunteered before, then you know how gratifying it can be when you can peek the interest of adults and children about nature and birds. The more volunteers we have, the more fun we have. This is your opportunity to help your chapter. If you can help, or more for information, call Vicki Flier, 314-968-9166. Come on out—we need you!

Winter Botanizing

Carl Darigo

Excluding various holidays and weather problems, the Botany Group’s Thursday outings continued through the winter season, with following attending one or more times: Father James Sullivan, Dana Barbard, Jeanne Clauson, John Crafton, Carl Darigo, Jane Deschu, Sue Gustafson, Pat & Jack Harris, Nels Holmberg, Judy Hunter, Barbara Lawton, Jeannie Moe, Rick Moll, Betty & Bob Nellums, Tori O’Gorman, Martha Riley, Suzy & Dick Russell, Al Seppi and Kathy Thiele.

December 2, Dresser Island Access, St. Charles County—a group of 10, including Rick Moll’s neighbor, John Crafton, enjoyed continuing good weather in the 60’s, while traversing a forest road northwest from the causeway. Dresser Island waters were warmed by Portage Des Sioux power plant’s discharge, and a constant water level upriver from Alton Dam frees visitors from the worry of being stranded, as can occur on Howell Island. Four flowering plants still survived, Erigeron annuus (daisy fleabane), Physostegia virginiana (obedient plant) plus both pink and white forms of Polygonum pensylvanicum (pinkweed). Interesting dried plants seen were Erysimum repandum (bushy wallflower), with white, skeleton-like branches, “tractor seats” of Scutellaria lateriflora (mad dog skullcap), Leptochloa panicoides (Amazon sprangletop), a grass with “bottle brush” shaped inflorescences, Lysimachia ciliata (fringed loosestrife) having round fruits apparently gnawed clean of seeds by insects and fuzzy Sicyos angulatus (bur cucumber) fruits. Dick Russell’s wry face after sampling seeds of the latter, proved their inedibility. Jack Harris compared two Hibiscus plants, H. lasiocarpos (hairy rose mallow) having hairy capsules and smooth seeds with H. Luevis (rose mallow) smooth capsules and hairy seeds. Kathy Thiele spotted a flatnosed and deceased shrew in the pathway, then pointed out a reddish dragonfly sunning on Al Seppi’s shoulder. When an incoming duck
hunter was told no ducks had been seen, he showed a briefcase filled with books, for just such an eventuality.

December 9, Missouri Botanical Garden—early sunshine appeared to usurp a rain forecast which had led a group of eight to the shelter of Missouri Botanical Garden; however, all were pleased in the correct decision when rain did start in mid-morning. Along an outside path, pansies and lilies were brightly blooming, as was white-flowering *Lonicera fragrantissima* (fragrant honeysuckle). The native eastern witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) was sporting tiny yellow blossoms, but was not as aromatic as the later blooming Ozark witch hazel.

Closeby stood a row of gigantic, 25-foot-tall, yellow grove bamboo (*Phyllostachys aureosulcata*). Interesting Climatron plants included huge Bolivian maidenhair fern (*Adiantum peruvianum*), purple flowers of bush clock vine (*Thunbergia erecta*), white Chinese lantern flowers (*Abutilon hybridum*), tropical butterfly weed (*Asclepias curassavica*) with its reddish-orange blossoms, purple skunkweed (*Stachytarpheta speciosa*), lady of the night (*Brunfelsia americana*) with delicate lavender flowers, and fuzzy pods of *Thalia geniculata* (thalia), a water plant from Florida and the West Indies. Attractive plants seen in the Schoenberg Temperate House were throatwort (*Trachelium caeruleum*) having small blue flowers and clanwilliam daisy (*Euryops pectinatus*) with many large yellow blossoms. Later during lunch in the MBG restaurant, Father Sullivan pointed out a giant, red-spotted tortoise beetle, pictured on a wall mural.

December 16, Lower Meramec Park, St. Louis County—a 32° and partly sunny day greeted eight participants, including WGNSS president Sue Gustafson, who walked the trail and old road to check out this site's winter plants, after a successful first visit in August. While still at the parking lot, Al Seppi and Tom O'Gorman collaborated in correctly answering an *Ilex decidua* (deciduous holly) test, on a scrawny plant with only leaves, otherwise at first glance appearing to be privet. Later, so many bright red, fruiting trees were seen, that some considered naming the path "Ilex Trail." Not surprisingly, a lone, hardy dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) was the only flowering survivor for the day. Many dried plants were examined, such as *Carex frankii* (Frank's sedge) having "top"-shaped perigynia, *Anmnnia cocinea* (longleaf toothcup) with cup-like pods holding a zillion seeds, calyx/seeds of the same two *Hibiscus* species, *H. lasiocardos* (hairy rose mallow) and *H. laevis* (rose mallow) as had been seen at Dresser's Island previously, and fruiting heads of *Smallanthus uvedalius* (bearfoot) with large Asteraceae family achenes. Father Sullivan found a good growth of *Rubus trivialis* (southern dewberry), stems of which are covered with reddish spines and hairs, while Betty Nellums spotted a nice buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) in a Meramec Bottom-Road ditch, to resolve identification of an earlier suspicious and degenerate plant of the same species. The birders present enjoyed seeing downy, hairy, piliated and many red headed woodpeckers.

December 23, Robertsville State Park, Franklin County—25° and a few snow flurries did not deter five faithful from accepting Jack Harris' suggestion to look for frost flowers. Before embarking on the River Trail, Father Sullivan suggested driving to the campground loop, whose hilly and rocky habitat might be a better source for dittany (*Cynula aroganoides*). Frost flowers were absent, but the reddish-orange capsules of *Triosteyum illinoense* (oval-fruited horse gentian) were seen, and photographers Jeanne Clauson and Al Seppi were able to document a nice Adam & Eve orchid (*Aplectrum hyemale*), complete with green leaves and dried fruiting stem.

Along the river bank, amid many beaver-gnawed trees, a yellow-rumped warbler was noted rapidly devouring white berries of poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*). Other interesting finds were large, round fruits of woolly pipe-vine (*Aristolochia tomentosa*),
bright red American basswood (*Tilia americana*) buds, American bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*) "rattling" capsules, three-bracted elephant's foot (*Elephantopus carolinianus*) fruits, and a grove of river birch (*Betula nigra*) trees, whose curly; red bark glimmered in the weak sunlight. Near the park road, Jack Harris and Father Sullivan spotted two, tiny, flowering violets (*Viola sororia*), braving the winter weather along with the ever-present dandelions (*Taraxacum officinale*).

December 30, St. Stanislaus Conservation Area, St. Louis County—on a cloudy, but fairly mild day, eight people made a 1st-time visit to this site which is eased from St. Louis County Parks Department by the Department of Conservation and managed for a variety of wildlife species. The winter blooming-plant streak continued with obedient plant (*Physostegia virginiana*), doing the honors. Several vines seen were raccoon grape (*Amelopsis cordata*), balloon vine (*Cardiospermum halicaciaum*), angle pod (*Cynanchum laeve*) and false buckwheat (*Polygonum scandens*). Also found were prickly sida (*Sida spinosa*), cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium*) and velvet leaf (*Abutilon theophrasti*), while in another field, plantings had been made of prairie cord grass (*Spartina pectinata*) and bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*).

January 6, Lower Meramec Park, St. Louis County—a pleasant, sunny winter day, warming from 35° to 45°, set the stage for 10 people who checked out the area north of Meramec Bottom Road in the park. Although this week marked the winter's first without a flowering plant, numerous interesting fruiting and dried species were seen, including long, brown, pea-like pods of *Wisteria frutescens* (wisteria), *Crateagus viridis* (green haw) with red berries,awned spikelets of *Elymus virginicus* (Virginia wild rye), and *Rudbeckia triloba* (brown-eyed Susan) heads having their familiar "terpentine" aroma. Test time found three winners, Pat Harris identifying mad-dog skullcap (*Scutellaria lateriflora*), Tom O'Gorman honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*), and Jack Harris persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*). Many cedar waxwings were seen devouring the abundant deciduous holly berries (*Ilex decidua*).

January 13, Emmerich Nature Park, St. Louis County—a sunny, but chilly day in the 30's was the setting for a group of 11 who started from the south end of the site where a handicap trail and ditch-crossing bridge are being built. This former Kirkwood park is now being managed by the Department of Conservation as part of Powder Valley nature Center. A search was made for the tiny, red female flowers of hazelnut (*Corylus americana*), but only male catkins were found. Lack of flowering plants led to spirited identifications of oncoming leafy, green rosettes, such as chervil (*Chaerophyllum procumbens*), Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium reptans*), ragwort (*Senecio sp.*), white avens (*Geum canadense*); violet (*Viola sp.*), phlox (*Phlox sp.*) and smooth rock cress (*Arabis laevigata*). Nels Holmberg spotted the typical fruit of the grass, American beakgrass (*Diarthena obovata*).

January 27, Route 66 State Park, St. Louis County—three hardy adventurers managed to survive initial 15° temperature which did increase to a balmy 25°, while walking parts of the river Trail and adjacent park roads. Although no flowering plants survived the frigid day, numerous additions were made to the park's plant list, for which Naturalist Lori Miduth had asked WGNSS help in compiling. Some of the more interesting finds were two *Hibiscus* species, *H. laevis* (rose mallow) and *H. latisfilteros* (hairy rose mallow), *Dulichium arundinaceum* (three-way sedge), *Helenium flexuosum* (purple-headed sneezeweed), *Juncus effusus* (soft rush), *Carex lateriflora* (bus hump) and *Calamagrostis canadensis* (bluejoint grass). Father Sullivan was not surprised to find that all of his favorite beetles had sensibly deserted *Teucrium canadense* (wood sage) until warmer days. Several trees drew attention; *Norway spruce* (*Picea abies*) with bright green, four-sided
needles and large cones, swamp white oak (Quercus bicolor) and a grove of pin oaks (Quercus palustris) which appeared to be occurring naturally instead of being planted. Nels Holmberg spotted a clump of tiny Bryum caespiticeum (long-collared moss) growing in roadside gravel; this genus frequently inhabits disturbed sites.

February 17, Robertsville State Park, Franklin County—a threatening forecast of early afternoon sleet only resulted in light rain due to slightly above freezing temperature, but was worrisome enough so that four stalwarts did an abbreviated tour south and east of the boat ramp area in a futile search for harbinger of spring (Erigenia bulbosa). Last year practically to the day, this plant was abundantly in flower, along with several other spring species. However, the disappointment was partially alleviated by finding shellbark hickory (Carya laciniosa) in the nearby river bottomland; fruiting husks are larger, and with greater length/width ratio than the more common shagbark hickory (Carya ovata) and leaves have seven or more leaflets compared to five. Much Punctelia rudecta (common white-spot lichen), widespread in the state, was observed on tree trunks near the river bank.

February 24, Babler State Park, St. Louis County—eight persons took advantage of a near-record 75° to walk an old, unused road at the park’s northern edge. Even though some construction activity has occurred along the road, the strawberry shrubs (Calycanthus floridus) seem to be doing well. Jack Harris found both forms of Bötrychium dissectum (cut-leaf grape fern) growing side by side; the plants have been combined into one taxon in the new monocot flora. Jack also came up with brown cap lichen (Gladonia peziciformis), having brown pointed stalks, as compared to the bright red of related “British Soldiers.” Pat Harris took honors for the years’ first flowering plants, exciting Stellaria media (common chickweed) and Capsella bursa-pastoris (shepherd’s purse). Father Sullivan demonstrated the significant difference between green ash (Fraxinus pennsylvanica) narrow terminal buds and the much wider white ash (F. americana) terminal buds. The road shoulders and idle asphalt surface were festooned with mats of silver moss (Bryum argenteum); whose hyaline-tipped leaves cause the silver appearance. Birders Jeannie Moe and Al Seppi identified three American woodcocks, flushed out of the woods alongside the road.

Many thanks to Pat & Jack Harris for contributing information to this article.

Oops! I make the faux-pas!
People have straightened me out on the correct totals from last year.

Corrected Year Lists ’99
Connie Alwood........................269
George Barker........................257
Terry Barker..........................254
Jackie Chain..........................253
Torrey Berger........................252
Rose Ann Bodman......................250
John Loomis.........................243
Dick Coles.............................241
Paul Bauer............................235
John Solodar........................231
Lloyd Barber..........................225
Dottie Herweg........................223
Margo Holsen........................211
Jim Holsen............................206
Winter Birding In Texas

Bob and Frances McFall

My wife Frances and I went to Texas on a winter vacation/birding trip, pulling our travel trailer. We left on January 17 just ahead of a threatened freezing rain. I thought it was a good omen when I saw seven snipe flying behind the office at our first campsite in Texarkana, AR.

We went to Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge on the 20th. The Lane guide reports that Barn Owls are often seen near the check-in area there. When we arrived, we found they were in the midst of a controlled burn on the east side of the refuge. We birded the west side of the refuge, found several Seaside Sparrows*—lifer—while we were waiting for it to get dark enough to see the owls. No owls. Once again, the elusive Barn Owl has been too elusive.

We spent several days camped at Galveston Island SP, while we birded the Galveston area. I must recommend this experience to you. The campground is right next to the beach. A walk on the beach is always nice, you never know what will turn up. This year we had races with Sanderlings. The wet spots between the sections of campgrounds were dry. In other years these have had moorhens and other waterfowl. One spring we had painted buntings as a yard bird. This year we had breakfast with a small flock of five Long-billed Curlew and one Marbled Godwit each morning. The Godwit had a broken leg. Besides the Laughing Gulls and great tailed grackle that cheered us each day, we also learned to appreciate the shriek of the loggerhead shrike. The old Gershwin show Anything Goes was playing at the Galveston Theater. On one of our excursions we happened onto the Sunday drivers. Seven ships headed for the Houston Port were lined up.

We moved on down the coast to Port Lavaca for a few days. The Port Lavaca city campground has the longest boardwalk in the world made from recycled plastic. A morning walk on the boardwalk is almost a guaranteed Clapper Rail*. The Lane Guide led us to the little port city of Port O'Connor. We were driving down a street when I noticed a green bird sitting on a wire. We were backing up to get a better look, a kestrel sat down on the same wire. The birds frightened each other and began to fly. I was not concerned as I had a good view of the green bird—a parakeet? As it flew down the street it crossed paths with a small flock of starlings crossing the street and I lost it completely. Oh well.

From there we went on to Corpus Christi. We had signed up for the ABA Regional Conference. WGNSS was well represented as Bill Headdy and Barbara Elfinar were also in attendance. The conference gave us opportunities to bird in places we would not have been able to see on our own. On our trip to King Ranch, I saw Cave Swallows*; I did not expect to see them at this time of year (late January). This period was probably the worst weather of our entire 5 week trip. We were eating lunch on the bus at King Ranch when someone found a blue phase Ross's Goose. The short stubby bill, head shape and smaller size were all very evident through a scope from about 50 yards away. The trip to Indian Point yielded the third Clapper Rail of the trip. Our trip to Aransas Pass and on the whooping crane boat was outstanding. We had good looks at about 20+ Whooping Cranes. This was good for us as our last visit had come on a very cloudy, rainy day. This was much more satisfactory. We also saw a lone Mountain Bluebird, much out of its territory at Aransas Pass.

We stopped in a campground at Arroyo City, TX because it was near Laguna Atascosa NWR. 80% of the Redheads in the United States winter there. It rained much of the day. We saw Olive Sparrows* and an ovenbird at the nature center. We spent a few days in Brownsville. While visiting the zoo, we saw an orangutan catch a Laughing Gull. The gull finally escaped minutes a few feathers. We were trying to get a better look at some Red-crowned Parrots near the zoo and found an Altamira Oriole. We found a Ringed Kingfisher sitting on a wire across...
from the entrance to our campground. Once again our trip to the landfill to see the Tamaulipas Crow was unsuccessful. Local birders told me that it had not been there for a couple of years. They were all there looking at the kazillion gulls eating their lunch. The landfill is the only one I have seen in which birders have their own marked road and parking place.

We moved on to a campground just outside of Bentsen State Park. A trip to the McAllen Sewage Ponds yielded three Tropical Kingbirds* singing on a wire. The park was a disappointment this year. The Clay-colored Robins were gone. "When the anacuan berries are gone the robins are too." The Hook-billed Kites didn't cooperate. There were more birders than birds. The Blue Bunting died. All-in-all—a bad time. But an early morning trip to Chihuahuan Woods let me catch a fleeting look at the Hook-billed Kite*. The ecology of the kite and a tree snail is very interesting. The snail comes out for moisture (and what else I don't know)—The kite gets up early to eat the snail. Which means the birders has to get up early to see the kite. A trip to Anzúl Duas County Park was rewarding. A gray hawk* was soaring over the park mixed in with some vultures. But no Zone-tailed Hawk. I was set up by some local birders to look for the zone-tail but found the gray hawk instead. I found an Eastern Screech Owl in a hollow tree in the picnic area. There were Tree and Rough-winged Swallows on the wire. Lots of Eastern Bluebirds which pleased Fritz and a lot. On the way back to camp, we found a Barn Owl dead by the side of the road. Too bad—if it had been alive, I would have had another lifer.

We moved on to Falcon Lake SP. There were Sprague’s pipits* in the short grass in front of the checkpoint at Falcon Dam and rock wrens frolicked in the rocks along the embankment. Four Osprey soared over the nearly dry river below the dam. A peccary tried to cross the highway near the dam. Every time he got close a car would turn him back. Instead of just retreating a few yards each car caused him to race madly for the cover of a tree line about 60 yards away. Then he had to make his way back to the road only to be driven away again. After three unsuccessful efforts he finally gave up.

Our trip to Salineño and Chapeno were lots of fun. In a large anacua tree near the church, we found several Kiskadees and two very shy clay-colored Robins*. Three brown jays* flew in and the Kiskadees retreated. Then the robins became much more open in their feeding. When the jays left, the Kiskadees returned and the robins retired. The Dewind's feeders had Hooded, Altimira's and Audubon's Orioles. A: Chapena a little green kingfisher raced across the Rio Grande to his lookout post on the little island there. A group of about 40 Buffleheads drifted past us down the river through some ripples. Then they would fly back upstream to repeat the trip. Feeding or fun? Business or pleasure?

Our last night at Falcon was an interesting one. Right after dark I became aware of a strange half buzz, half call. I went out looking for the noisy guy. I found half of the campers out also. We finally found a Parauque sitting on a post by the bathroom. It had been using the bathroom light to attract its supper. A passing car flushed it, but it returned twice more that evening.

The 200th and last bird of our trip was a house finch found in the campground in San Antonio. We had a long weekend visit with daughter and her family in Oklahoma City. We noticed on our way up I-44 towards St. Louis that the red tailed hawk count was much lower than our other trips. I guess that many of them have begun to go north by Feb 22 and 23: We usually count more than 100 between OK City and St. Louis. This trip was less than 40.*

*new URL

www.wgnss.org
May 25th–28 (Th–Sun) Quivira NWR & Cheyenne Bottoms CA in central KS
This has been an unbelievable trip for the last two years at this time. See breeding phalaropes, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Snowy Plovers, and lots of other wonderful birds. Don’t miss out on the fun! Reserve your spot on this trip any time after April 1st by calling Jim Malone at (636) 536-1119, or e-mail me at stlaud@inlink.com.

Pere Marquette & Mark Twain NWR

Irene Mondhink

2/1/00 Rough-legged Hawk
2/10 Blue-winged Teal upper Stump Lk.
2/18 Harris’s Sparrow Rose Rd. into HQ
2/20 Long-eared Owl (s?) All around—never seeming to settle in one place.
2/26 Snipes Pumph Rц.western Towhee, Pohlwm Slough
Turkey Vultures 3
White-fronted Geese 30
2/26 White Pelican flock increasing; at least 200
2/28 Am. Woodcock displaying in a field at Principia College

The large flock of Snow Gees are still in Swan Lk.; through numbers are decreasing. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers have been regularly, just inside, the gate at Gilbert Lk. We continue to see the Cooper’s Hawk in and around refuge headquarters. There have been large numbers of E. Bluebirds all over the area.

Many sightings of Fox Sparrows each week.

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2/28 Am. Woodcock displaying in a field at Principia College

The large flock of Snow Gees are still in Swan Lk.; through numbers are decreasing. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers have been regularly, just inside, the gate at Gilbert Lk. We continue to see the Cooper’s Hawk in and around refuge headquarters. There have been large numbers of E. Bluebirds all over the area. Many sightings of Fox Sparrows each week.

May 25th–28 (Th–Sun) Quivira NWR & Cheyenne Bottoms CA in central KS
This has been an unbelievable trip for the last two years at this time. See breeding phalaropes, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Snowy Plovers, and lots of other wonderful birds. Don’t miss out on the fun! Reserve your spot on this trip any time after April 1st by calling Jim Malone at (636) 536-1119, or e-mail me at stlaud@inlink.com.

Pere Marquette & Mark Twain NWR

Irene Mondhink

2/1/00 Rough-legged Hawk
2/10 Blue-winged Teal upper Stump Lk.
2/18 Harris’s Sparrow Rose Rd. into HQ
2/20 Long-eared Owl (s?) All around—never seeming to settle in one place.
2/26 Snipes Pumph Rц. western Towhee, Pohlwm Slough
Turkey Vultures 3
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Some Bird Lore from 1907 (or, the power of negative thinking)

From A Preliminary Checklist of the Birds of Missouri, by Otto Widmann (1907)

Canada Goose. In Missouri the wild goose is a common transient visitor and a not very rare winter resident, being present in larger or smaller numbers from early October to the latter part of April, leaving the state entirely only for a short time during the severest winter weather when the ground is covered with snow and the rivers are frozen. When the first white men flocked into the state, they found geese nesting all along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. In his Trip Through North America the Prince of Wied tells us that he found on April 25, 1833, a nest in a tree at the mouth of Nodaway River, and that the next day that he met with a group of goslings guarded by their parents.

During the last decade of the past century, the peninsula of Missouri still harbored a small group of breeding pairs, usually nesting on cypress stumps in the overflow, 6 to 8 feet above the water. The natives hunted their eggs and young, and bevvies of semi-domesticated Wild Geese were a common sight in Pemiscot and Dunklin Counties. Pairs thus reared were allowed to make their own nests in the fields of the farmer and incubated the eggs themselves, the gander keeping guard and boldly attacking all intruders. As there has been a great influx of settlers into that country during the last few years, it is probable that the days of the Wild Goose breeding in Missouri are past, but some may still at least try to remain. Non-breeders are sometimes seen in northern Missouri long after the transients are gone (May 3, 1887, St. Louis; May 18, 1902, Mt. Carmel; June 7, 1886, Mt. Carmel.

February 2000 Birding Report

Jim Ziebol & Yvonne Homeyer

An extraordinary count of 230 Horned Grebes, along with 75 Pied-billed Grebes, were seen on 2/12 at Baldwin Lake (KM). White Pelicans were reported from several places in the area, with 200 on 2/22 at West Alton/Lincoln Shields (CM), 78 at Horseshoe Lake on 2/23 (T Be), and 165 at Mark Twain NWR on 2/25 (PB). Twenty-five Great Blue Herons were present on the South Levee Road on 2/16 (JZ). A Sandhill Crane was heard but not seen at Carlyle Lake on 2/9 (KM). Mute Swans were reported at Ellis Bay on 2/3 (KL) and Eagle Lake/Peabody Wildlife Area on 2/6 (Mary Regan). Dennis Bozay supplied excellent photos of the immature Mute Swan at Busch. Ross’s Geese were seen area-wide, with 2 present along Schoolhouse Road on 2/19 (MT). On 2/17, 15,000 Snow Geese were estimated at Swan Lake/Mark Twain NWR (HW). Greater White-fronted Geese numbered 20 on Schoolhouse Road on 2/20 (FH) and 40 at Ellis Bay on 2/22 (CM). A White-fronted Goose was observed by many at Harpont Lake/Busch (J Mo). Ross’s Goose, White-fronted Goose and Black Duck were seen at Carlyle Lake on 2/5 (G&TB). Many Hutchinson race of Canada Geese were observed at Busch/Lake 33 on 2/6 (YH) and on 2/8 (DB, photos). High counts of Fintails included 450 on Schoolhouse Road on 2/20 (FH) and 1,004 at the Causeway/Horseshoe Lake on 2/22 (T Be). A large concentration of Scap (400+) were seen at the Granite City Steel pools on 2/7 (B Ru). Wilma Kennell located a Greater Scaup at Riverlands on 2/1. Paul Bauer found 18 duck species at Horseshoe Lake and Schoolhouse Road on 2/20. One hundred Hooded Mergansers were present at Horseshoe Lake/Layton Road on 2/1 (T Be); this is a very good count. Five hundred Common Mergansers were seen in the same location on 2/8 (T Be). Bald Eagles numbered 75 area-wide on 2/6 (FH) and 41 Bald Eagles were found at Riverlands on 2/7 (Mt). A Sharp-shinned Hawk was found at MTC on
2/6 (Mike Grant, Doug Corbett). A Cooper's Hawk was seen at Swan Lake on 2/17 (HW). On 2/27, an adult Red-shouldered Hawk was observed at Busch/Lake 32 (YH). The Barkers found 3 Red-shouldered Hawks at Castlewood on 2/27, including a pair mating. The adult Harlan's Hawk at Sand Prairie Lane remained into February (T Be) and immatures were seen at Horseshoe Lake on 2/6 and on the South Levee Road on 2/12 (JZ). Rough-legged Hawks were found area-wide: 3 in St. Charles County on 2/2 (J Mo), 1 in Jersey County, Ill. on 2/17 (HW), and an intermediate phase adult at Busch on 2/19 (J Mo). A Merlin dove past their car on Hwy. 94 on 2/16 (Mike Grant, Doug Corbett).

Early shorebirds included 3 Lesser Yellowlegs at Busch on 2/19 (JZ) and 1 at Riverlands on 2/21 (P&BJ). On 2/28, the Johnsons also found Least Sandpiper at Riverlands. Killdeer and Snipe showed up throughout the month. The first Woodcock reported was at Busch on 2/6 (YH) and on 2/18, Charlene Malone heard Woodcocks "peenting." The Botany Group flushed 4 Woodcocks at Babler SP on 2/24 (J Mo).

Bonaparte's Gulls were first reported from Horseshoe Lake on 2/22 (T Be), followed by 2 seen at Mark Twain NWR on 2/28 (P&BJ) and 6 more found by Bill Boesch at the Causeway/Horseshoe Lake on 2/29. Lingering large gulls included a Glaucous at Horseshoe Lake on 2/8 (KL) and a Thayer's at Horseshoe on 2/5 (MT). Another Great Black-backed Gull was seen on 2/10 at Riverlands (G&TB). A Great Horned Owl was seen at the dredge/Horseshoe Lake on 2/20 (FH) and another was seen on St. Louis Co. Waterworks Road on 2/16 (G&TB). Jim & Margot Holsen located the Long-eared Owl that was being seen in Calhoun Co., Ill. on 2/19 and Mike Theilen had an apparently one at Riverlands that same day. Screech Owls were reported from the homes of Wilma Kennell and Conine Alwood. Wilma Kennell also had a Hairy Woodpecker at her home on 2/19. The Johnsons located their second Northern Shrike of the winter at Horseshoe Lake on 2/6. Another Northern Shrike was seen at Dwiggins Road on 2/11 (CM). Two Ruby-crowned Kinglets were reported, with one at Elsah, Ill. (KL) and one at Busch on 2/6 (YH). A somewhat early Tree Swallow was seen at Horseshoe Lake on 2/22 (B Ru). Two Marsh Wrens were a good find at Little Creve Coeur Marsh on 2/12 (T Bo, BK). On 2/27, two Hermit Thrush were seen at Busch (DB). Jeannie Moe found both Hermit Thrush and Pine Siskin on the Fallen Oak Trail at Busch on 2/9. Bill Boesch found the spring's first Brown Thrasher on Layton Road/Horseshoe Lake on 2/29. American Pipits were observed at Riverlands on 2/28 (P&BJ).

Several Pine Warblers were reported from Rockwoods at the end of the month, the first on 2/28 (CM) and as many as 4 singing males on 2/29 (Liz & Doug Corbett). Yellow-rumped Warblers were easy to find this winter. Three Leconte's Sparrows were found at Little Creve Coeur Marsh on 2/12 (BK, T Bo). Savannah Sparrows were reported from Riverlands on 2/1 (Wilma Kennell) and Horseshoe Lake on 2/7 (B Ru). Yvonne Homeyer located 5 Field Sparrows at Busch on 2/6. Two Harris's Sparrows were a good find near the office of Mark Twain NWR on 2/15 (Lou Hanes, m. ob.). Thirty-five White-crowned Sparrows were also present there on 2/18 (T Be). A Lincoln's Sparrow was seen at Tower Grove Park on 2/24 (BK); it was either a rare winter visitor or an early migrant. Swamp and Song Sparrows were estimated at 25 each on 2/26 at MTG (J Mo). Eastern Towhee was first reported on 2/27 from Horseshoe Lake (FH) and a Spotted Towhee was found in Calhoun County, Ill. on 2/28 (P&BJ). Sixty + E. Meadowlarks were present along the South Levee Road on 2/16 (JZ). A nice flock of 32 Rusty Blackbirds was seen at Dardenne/Busch on 2/27 (DB).

Comments: These were some late dates that Paul Bauer found the following species: 1/31, Short-eared Owl, St. Charles County; 2/22, 16 Trumpeter Swans, Riverlands; 2/24, only 2 Bald Eagles were seen between Riverlands and Mark Twain NWR. Many of
the ducks had migrated out by month’s end. A Canada Goose was seen at Gilbert Lake on 2/15 with a red-marked neck from the shoulder to just below the head (HW). Has anyone heard of this kind of marking? Helen Wuestenfeld reports that the Bald Eagle nest at Gilbert Lake is active. The female Oldsquaw spent January and February at the Causeway/Horseshoe Lake, to the delight of many (Photo, FH). Torrey Berger saw a Cooper’s Hawk kill a sparrow at Busch on 2/11. Jim Teeple accurately described a Northern Goshawk at his feeder on 2/5.

Wilma Kennell’s Catbird was still present at the end of the month. Mike Thelen reported 2 foxes on the ice at Ellis Bay on 2/5 and a Mourning Cloak at the Arboretum on 2/27. From 2/21 to 2/24, Mike Brady found the following at Castlewood: Turkey Vulture, E. Phoebbe, Fish Crows, Winter Wren, 2 pairs of Red-shouldered Hawks, and Wood Ducks.

Dennis Bozzay photographed a very curious Garter Snake at Dardenne/Busch on 2/27. A Barn Swallow was observed carrying nesting material in St. Charles Co. at the end of Feb.—reported by Nancy Snider.

Thanks to Mike Flieg for completing the Dick Anderson Memorial Fountain. The water will be turned on April 1.

Please report Whip-poor-wills and Chuck-will’s-widows on territory after May 1. Whip-poor-wills are generally declining in the East, whereas Chuck-will’s-widow are expanding their range northward.

Contributors: Connie Alwood, George & Terry Barker, Paul Bauer, David Becher, Torrey Berger, Tom Bornman, Dennis Bozzay, Mike Brady, Dick Coles, Frank Holmes, Yvonne Homeyer, Paul & Barbara Johnson, Dan Kassebaum, Bob Kleiger, Randy Korpel, Kent Lannert, Jim & Charlene Malone, Keith McMullen, Jeannine Moe, Mark Peters, Bill Rowe, Bill Rudden, John Soltanian, Mike Thelen, Helen Wuestenfeld, Jim Ziebol, many observers. An asterisk means “documented.”

To submit a report, call Jim Ziebol at 314-781-7372 or email Yvonne Homeyer at homeyer@postnet.com by the last day of the month.

Yes, Spring Has Now Begun!!

Bill Miles

On February 28, Earth’s Classroom did a prescribed burn of about 20 acres that included woods and old fields. However, this was not the thing that sparked (HA, HA) my sense of wonder and desire to send in an article. Many signs, much less defined than the equinox, mark spring for many people, me included. Each of us has something that lets us know when spring has arrived. For some of us it might be the over all big picture of longer days, greener yards, and the sounds of Mother Nature waking up. Others look, listen or feel for something more precise that tells us, at least in our own minds, that “Yes, spring has now begun!!”

It might be that first chorus of spring peepers, the lovely song of the bluebird, or the blooming of the yellow daffodil in your yard. In my mind, many things announce spring. But, the one that lets me know “Yes, spring has now begun!!” is something Aldo Leopold, in his book A Sand County Almanac, describes beautifully. In April there is a section called the “Sky Dance.” This section, if you do not know or have not had the privilege to experience through Leopold’s words, is about the Woodcock. This bird is seldom seen and seldom heard; unless you go out and listen. This little bird is my big “spring is here” and for me has something mystic about it. It could be the draw of warmer days, cool nights with clear starlit skies, and the ruby red western backdrop that the woodcock chooses to appear in, or it could be that I just find the little critter neat. I really do not know which it is, but I know I like it!! I would quote Aldo, but I would have to do the whole section and this newsletter has other important things to do. This spring’s first woodcock was particularly special and intriguing.

As I mentioned, we had just finished a controlled burn. We were doing a patrol wagon ride with the volunteers and an extra friend that had just stopped by when my ears, under the roar of the tractor, caught
that long lost “peent” of the woodcock. We stopped the tractor, and just happened to be in the perfect eastern side of the field. We listened and watched the sky dance of the woodcock as he danced in our freshly charred field with the added backdrop of candlelight, I guess it seemed romantic to him. Well, not exactly candle light, but the glow and flicker of many burning logs and snags. I found it quite beautiful and peaceful. Finally “spring has now begun!!”

Conservation Committee Report

Yvonne Homeyer

An important heronry/rookery on the East side is in danger due to proposed construction on adjacent land. The Union Pacific RR is planning to build a facility on its land in Alorton, Illinois (near the Centreville city line). This project will negatively impact the nesting colony of Little Blue Herons, Snowy Egrets, and both Night Herons, which are all on the Illinois Endangered Species List. This heronry is the northernmost location in the Midwest where Snowy Egrets and Little Blue Herons have a large colony. In addition, rail species such as King Rail and Common Moorhen are also found there. Union Pacific RR will need permission from the Corps of Engineers to build the facility, as it will impact the adjacent wetlands where the heronry is located. Attached to the end of this newsletter is a letter written by Sue Gustafson which you can remove, sign and mail to the Corps of Engineers. This is a very URGENT matter that we ask you to put to the top of your “To Do List.” We must do everything we can to SAVE this habitat and to prevent disturbance to the colony.

Our Committee has begun compiling articles and scientific studies on birds killed at communications towers, as well as lighted buildings. Here are some Internet sites to get information. If anyone wants this information but does not have access to the Internet, call Yvonne (314-963-7750) to get a copy. An annotated bibliography published by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service can be found at:

http://www.fws.gov/r9mbmo/issues/tcwer.htm

An excellent overview of the problem was presented in an article in the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources magazine. It can be found on-line at:

http://www.warmag.com/stories/2000/feb00/birdtower.htm. A website dedicated solely to the problem of tower kills is:

http://www.towerkill.com which has links to many other sites.

In addition, the most recent (March-April) issue of Audubon magazine has an article entitled “The Dark Side of Light.” Scientist Sidney Gauthreaux (whose radar studies of migrating birds crossing the Gulf of Mexico show a significant decline in the number of migrating birds in recent years) is also studying the problem of birds killed when attracted to lighted sources. One of the worst disasters occurred in 1954, when 50,000 birds were killed at an Air Force Base in Georgia when they followed the beam of a guide light straight into the ground. On 1/22/98, between 5,000 and 10,000 Lapland Longspurs collided with radio towers in Kansas. Many, many more collisions of this type have been documented. Songbirds are most at risk, because they fly at lower altitudes.

The Dick Anderson Memorial Fountain in Forest Park is now completed. Many thanks to those whose generous contributions funded this memorial, and to Mike Flieg, WGNSS member and contractor, who installed the pipe system. Randy Korotev, Ken Cohen, Jim Ziebol (who conceived the idea), Sue Gustafson, and the St. Louis City Parks Department also played key roles. Birders and birds alike will enjoy this spot.

We are continuing our plans for a Butterfly Garden outside the new headquarters building at Busch CA. If you are interested in volunteering time, plants or seeds, please contact Co-chairs Jack Harris (314-894-9021) or Jeannie Moe (636-946-9802).

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, April 18. See the calendar for details.
FLAP: Fatal Light Awareness Program

Ken Cohen

With all the hazards and difficulties facing migratory birds, it’s somewhat heartening to find out about one which is preventable with a minimum amount of effort. At night, during their spring and fall migrations, many birds rely in part on the positions of the moon and the constellations to guide them. But while flying across cities, particularly when it’s overcast, they are often drawn to lights shining from skyscrapers. Many of the birds slam into windows and die. Others, dazed or unconscious, drop to the city pavement below only to be eaten by scavengers or swept up by street cleaners or maintenance people before the first office workers arrive.

Every year at least 100 million birds die after colliding with tall buildings or other manmade structures. Many of these casualties are species in long-term decline, with some already designated as threatened. The problem has been severe enough to spawn FLAP, the Fatal Light Awareness Program. This Toronto-based program, in conjunction with the World Wildlife Fund, enlists volunteers to keep records on injured birds, rescue and release when possible, and advise office-building managers on low-tech solutions.

What is not known is whether or not we have a similar problem in St. Louis. A few members of Audubon, along with equally concerned members of WGNSS, plan to conduct an informal study, during the peak migration season this spring, to ascertain if our evening-lighted tall buildings (and perhaps towers also) take a heavy toll on migrating birds. We are requesting volunteers for different aspects of this task: contacting building managers/owners, urging your own building manager to cooperate, and looking around the bases of tall downtown buildings at daybreak for injured/dead birds. Please contact Lynne Breakstone at 726-4772 if you would be willing to participate. Thanks to Karen Meyer for her help last year.

Secret MDC Chip Mill Study

Yvonne Homeyer

Thanks to all who sent in letters to the 4 Commissioners of the Missouri Department of Conservation. We have definitely gotten their attention from our letter writing campaign requesting a full, open discussion of the impact of chip mills on habitat and birds.

For those of you, including myself, who got a reply from Commissioner Anita Gorman, she had to look pretty hard at our letter to find “misinformation.” In her letter to me, she pointed out that Marvin Brown was not the Chair of the Chip Mill Advisory Committee, but was really the Co-Chair. Ms. Gorman is free to disagree with us about chip mills, and she obviously does. That does not equate with “misinformation.” We intend to keep on doing what we have been doing, which is raising issues and demanding that public officials protect birds and wildlife habitat.

Now, here are some highlights from the MDC “Draft Report on the Chip Mill Issue” dated December, 1998:

“The Missouri Ozarks is recognized as an important production area for forest Neotropical migratory birds. Many species of high priority forest birds have centers of abundance in this region. For example, Breeding Bird Survey data indicate that this physiographic area supports 25% of the world’s breeding Whip-poor-wills, 17% of Kentucky Warblers, 15% of Summer Tanagers, 14% of Worm-eating Warblers, 13% of Chuck-wills-widows, and 9% of Yellow-billed Cuckoos and Eastern Wood-Pewees. These bird populations appear to be breeding at or above replacement level and may be sources of individuals that colonize other geographic areas where reproductive rates of forest birds are below replacement level due to forest fragmentation. Large tracts of contiguous forest are important for many of the interior forest bird species. The Lower Ozarks contain the largest blocks of continuous forests in the state.”
Where timber-cutting practices are not regulated, the most common timber cutting method used is clearcutting. This will have a devastating impact on songbirds. In addition, animals and birds that eat hard mast and acorns, such as turkey, deer, and ruffed grouse, will find it tough going when the oak trees are gone.

One solution is requiring landowners to use “Best Management Practices” (BMPs) when harvesting timber. Right now, Missouri has no such forest protection and landowners are already using clearcuts to feed the 2 existing chip mills in Missouri. “It would be prudent to think of chip mills in the Ozarks as termites just starting to make themselves at home in our back yard. We may not be able to get rid of them entirely, but we dare not ignore them. And unless we act aggressively and quickly, they could do devastating damage to Missouri’s scenic forests, wildlife and streams” (St. Louis Post-Dispatch, January 11, 2000).

From The Outermost House: A Year of Life on the Great Beach of Cape Cod

Contributed by Diané Benjamin

One March evening, just as sundown was fading into night... I heard a familiar sound. Turning toward the marsh, I saw a flock of geese flying over the meadows along the rift of dying golden light, their great wings beating with a slow and solemn beauty, their musical, bell-like cry filling the lonely levels and the dark. Is there a nobler wild clamor in all the world?

Henry Beston, 1927

Note: Henry Beston gave his cottage to the Mass. Audubon Society in 1960. It continued to be rented out of Audubon members ever summer until a massive winter storm swept it out to see in February 1978.

A World in One Country—South Africa November 2000
With Renowned Birder & Naturalist Ken Newman

From cosmopolitan Cape Town to the wildlife of the award-winning Mala Mala Game Reserve, discover the beautiful diversity that is South Africa. Your safari begins in one of the world’s most beautiful cities, graced with Dutch architecture and the geological signature of Cape Town: Table Mountain. Portrayed by Ken Newman, author and artist of Newman’s Birds of Southern Africa, experience at a most enjoyable pace some of the finest bird-watching sites in South Africa including Hihiuwu, Nduro and the private reserve adjacent to Kruger with almost 500 species of birds. Continue to Mala Mala—home to lion, leopard, elephant and the best team of safari guides on the planet. Because the reserve is private, you see nature as it was meant to be seen, far from the madding crowd. In 1999 an Audubon group had 316 species of birds and 32 species of mammals in 11 days. Can we do better this year? Throughout, your accommodations are not just superior, but some of the best on the continent. An optional extension is also available to majestic Victoria Falls.

For fares or more information call Paul Bauer at the St. Louis Audubon Society at 314-921-3972.

Wildlife Expedition to Peru:
Featuring Tambopata National Park September 2000

Join Paul Bauer and the St. Louis Audubon Society and journey up the Amazon River by covered longboats to Posada Amazonas, a beautiful lodge nestled in the rainforest. Treks through the rainforest reveal a brilliant world of brightly colored macaws, herons, kingfishers and cormorants. Using a stable pontoon boat we also quietly explore the forest edge along the shores of a backwater lagoon where we can see the bizarre Hoatzin,
and watch a family of giant river otters at play. Continue to Tambopata National Park where at dawn, you will cross the river to witness parrots and macaws at the day lick. Learn first hand about the macaw project and regional conservation efforts while enjoying the research centers rustic charms. Tambopata in the rich Amazon River basin is reported to have the most diverse and bird-rich habitat. For one location they can boast the biggest birdlist in the world—a mindboggling 587 species and growing. In a typical visit we may expect 300 species of tropical birds.

An optional extension is available to discover the archaeological splendor of Cuzco and Machu Picchu, the mountaintop sanctuary Of the Incas, hidden from the world until river 1911. September is the best time of the year to visit these regions south of the equator, since it is like our spring time in North America.

For fares or more information call Paul Bauer, at the St. Louis Audubon Society at 314-921-3972. ~

**Spring Birding Festival at Powder Valley**

Tuesday, April 18 7:00–8:30 PM

Spring has arrived and more migrant songbirds are pouring in each day. The stunning beauty of these tiny migrants can be breathtaking and has made birdwatching one of the fastest growing outdoor activities in America today. Join us for the special program which is the joint effort of the St. Louis Audubon Society and the Powder Valley Nature Center. We will share a superb video providing extreme close-up views and sounds of the many colorful warblers that are often hard to find in the tree tops. Also, the best nearby locations to find these migrant birds will be illustrated. Several handouts will be available. This is a free program. Reservations begin April 4. Call 314-301-1500 ~

**Revised St. Louis Area Bird Book Now Available**

Paul Bauer


Detailed directions are provided to 125 birding spots in eastern Missouri and Southwestern Illinois, all located within 50 miles of St. Louis city limits. Over 80 birding locations are in Missouri, and more than 40 locations are in Illinois. Directions are aided with 17 colored maps. Seasonal distributions of birds are shown with bar graphs in color for 343 species. All 380 reported species are annotated. Locations for finding the unique Eurasian Tree Sparrow are given. A complete checklist is included.

Copies are available in the St. Louis area from numerous local Wild Bird Centers, Wild Bird Unlimited Stores, Wildbird Marketplace Stores, the St. Louis Zoo Gift Shop, the St. Louis Science Center, Library Limited, the Butterfly House, Missouri Botanical (Shaw’s) Garden Bookstore, Shaw Arboretum Shop, and Powder Valley Nature Center. By mail the book is available as catalog #308 from the American Birding Association (ABA); call 1-800/634-7736. You may charge it to a credit card.

So if you have any interest in birds, where to find birds during all seasons, when to expect specific birds in this area, and the historic records of rare bird sightings around St. Louis, make it a point to add this beautiful book to your references soon. If you have questions, call Paul Bauer at 314/921-3972. ~

**Tyon 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. ~
TV for the Nature Nut

Saturday, March 25 at 4:30, the new bird-watching show Stokes Birds at Home debuts on Channel 9. This will be a 13-parts series, beginning in the Stokes’s back yard and moving to birding hot spots around the nation, including the Shorebird Festival in Kachemak Bay, Alaska. Don and Lillian Stokes are the authors of Stokes Field Guide to Birds and hosted the TV series BirdWatch.

Also on Channel 9: Nature present “Eagles,” Sun., 3/26 at 8:00 PM and the World of National Geographic presents “Jewels of the Caribbean,” Tues., 3/28 at 7:00 PM.

On Animal Planet (on cable TV) watch Insectia, Thursdays at 8:30 PM, repeated Thursday 11:30 PM and Sat. 5:30 PM.

Also on Animal Planet, All Bird TV airs Sat. 8:30 AM, repeated at noon. Did you know that WGNSS member Tim Barksdale does photography for this show? It’s sponsored by the National Audubon Society and the Nature Conservancy.

Next Deadline: April 7

Submissions—handwritten, typed, IBM or Mac to: Anne McCormack, 587 Andrews, St. Louis MO 63122-5722. finearts@stjosephacad.com 965-8091, voice mail 965-7205, ext. 527. 

need directions?

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

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

Castlewood State Park
- Take Manchester west, south (left) on New Ballwin Rd., east (left) on Kiefer Creek Rd., follow signs.

Kohl’s
- 270 to Olive Blvd. west.
- Kohl’s is the NW corner of this intersection.
- Meet at SE corner of the parking lot, nearest the highway.

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.

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Membership: Linda Virga, 9734 Antonia Dr., St. Louis MO 63123, 544-3313.
Ornithology: David Becher, 12829 Mariners Pt Ct., St. Louis MO 63141, 576-1146.
Ornithology: Kevin Renick PO Box 31785, St. Louis MO 63131, 918-1085.
Entomology: Marshall Magner, 516 Bacon Ave, Webster Groves MO 63119, 961-4588.
Conservation: Yvonne Homeyer, 1508 Oriole Ln., St. Louis MO 63144 963-7750.
homeyer@postnet.com
Member at Large: John Molyneaux, 7822 Garden Ave., St. Louis MO 63119, 961-5181.
Member at Large: Tom O’Gorman, 465 N. Geyer, St. Louis MO 63122, 821-8079.
M at Large: Pat McCormick, 1338 Eaglebrooke Ct., Ballwin MO 63021, 314-825-2842
Immature Tundra:
Shortish pink (intense) bill with some black at base; head rounded; slim-necked. Distance from eye to nostril is greater than distance from nostril to tip of bill.

Immature Trumpeter:
Long bill, flat forehead gives similar appearance to that of a Canvasback. Much black at base of pink bill; slim-necked. The distance from the tip of the bill to the nostril, and the nostril to the eye, is equal.

IDENTIFYING TRUMPETER and TUNDRA SWANS


Immature Mute Swan:
Bluish-pinkish bill with sharply defined black at base. Prominence above nostril will be the knob on adult swan. Heavy, sturdy neck.

Typical Eastern White-crowned Sparrow

Pinkish Bill

Gambel's Race (more Western)

White Lores Orange Bill

HOMEYER/ZEBOI
Colonel Morrow  
District Commander, St. Louis District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
1222 Spruce  
St. Louis, Mo 63103-2833  
RE: Union Pacific RR facility in Centreville/Alorton, IL

Dear Colonel Morrow:

It has come to my attention that Union Pacific Railroad is proposing a car handling facility on vacant land in Centreville/Alorton, IL which is just 1000 feet north of the largest heron and egret nesting colony in the St. Louis Metro Area.

Every year, thousands of birds, including Little Blue Heron, Snowy Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, and Yellow-crowned Night Heron nest at this rookery. These species are categorized as threatened or endangered in Illinois and Missouri. Other Illinois threatened and endangered species that have occurred in the surrounding areas include King Rail, Common Moorhen, Pied-billed Grebe, Least Bittern, and occasionally Yellow-headed Blackbird.

I strongly urge you not to issue a permit to Union Pacific’s consultant on this project, Zambrana Engineering. The Corps of Engineers has made great strides in the restoration and protection of wetland areas that are immensely vital habitats to nesting and migratory species. We urge you to continue the progress that has been previously demonstrated. Please realize the ecological significance of this wetland area and decline any permit that would threaten this critical breeding habitat.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Webster Groves Nature Study Society

Meetings 🌱

Wednesday, April 5
7:30 PM note location change Board meeting Vicki Flier, 18 Algonquin Wood, St. Louis MO 63122, 968-9166. All members welcome.

Friday, April 14
8:00 PM St. Louis Co Library HQ on Lindbergh Blvd. Our speaker will be WGNSS member entomologist Ted McRae who will share his natural history expedition to South Africa.

Conservation 🌱

Tuesday, April 18
7:00 PM at Yvonne Homeyer’s, 1508 Oriole Ln., Brentwood, 963-7750. All members welcome.

Entomology 🐝

Saturday, April 22
Butterfly Walk, 10:00 AM Busch HQ parking lot. Leaders: Jim Ziebol & Yvonne Homeyer.

Sunday, April 23
7:00 PM at Magner’s, 516 Bacon Ave., 961-4588. Richard Clinebell will discuss “Pollination Biology of the Evening Primrose Family—Photomicro-graphs of the Poliants.”

Birding 🌼

Thursdays March & April
8:30 AM West County shopping center, south lower lot behind Penney’s, lamp post #1.

Saturday March 25 & April 1
8 AM WGNSS birding “Where the birds are,” Meet in the parking lot of Kohl’s at Olive & 270, in the SE corner (nearest highway intersection.) Bring lunch. For more info call David Becher: 576-1146.

Saturday March 25

Saturday April 8

Saturday April 15 & 29
8 AM Tower Grove Park. Bring lunch. Meet at Gus Foyt site.

Saturday April 22
7:30 AM Wgns/Aud. Castlewood SP.

Sunday April 30
7:30 AM Wgns/Aud Shaw Arboretum in Gray Summit. Fee $3.

Saturday March 25 & April 22
7:30 AM Kohl’s (see above). Bring lunch.

Saturday May 6
7:30 AM Castlewood SP. Meet near boat launch. Bring lunch.

Saturday May 13
Big Day!

Saturday May 20
8 AM Shaw Arboretum in Gray Summit. Meet at entrance to Brush Creek Trail. Bring a lunch you can carry. Fee $3.

Botany 🌿

Thursdays March—April

Join WGNSS
Send $15 to Randy Korotev, 800 Oakbrook Ln., St. Louis MO 63132

Visit: www.wgnss.org
Membership Application

Name

Address

City    State    Zip

Phone   e-mail    fax

Membership categories (circle one):
Individual or Family: $15
Student: $5
Life: $300

(lump sum or equal payments over 5 yrs.)

Please make check payable to: Webster Groves Nature Study Society

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