



Nature Notes

314-935-8432

Call the Nature Line for meeting times and bird sightings.

www.wgnss.org

Journal of Webster Groves Nature Study Society

September 2003 Vol. 75, No. 7

Reflections on *Birding on Borrowed Time*, by Phoebe Snetsinger

Marjorie Richardson

Years ago I remember saying to Phoebe, "You have a book in you." She wondered what it would be about and I answered, "It could be about anything." As the years went by and birding became her obsession, and her travels and growing list became well known, it was obvious that her about "about anything" would be a book about birding. And what a book it is!

Those of us who knew her will hear her voice speaking from every page because it's written just as if she were talking to us, telling stories of her birding trips, which often turned into extremely dangerous adventures. The book also answers the question of why our local "Phoebe sightings" were so rare after 1981, the year of her cancer diagnosis. She was at home spending enormous amounts of time updating her unique card-filing system for recording all species seen on a trip—each had to be seen, not just heard—or she was diligently studying and planning for her next trip, or she was away on one of those trips! This helps us to understand while she was so popular with trip leaders—she did her homework and was well prepared to identify all

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Pollinators of the Caribbean at Sept. 18 Meeting

Mike Flieg

At our first general meeting of the membership year, our speaker will be Elma Kay. She is a native of Belize and a doctoral candidate at SLU. She will present a PowerPoint presentation on "Passionflowers of the Caribbean and their Pollinators," including bats and hummingbirds. She presents fantastic photos of bats pollinating night-blooming passionflowers. Elma is mapping the family tree of the passionflowers in the Greater Antilles to discover whether the three night-blooming species had a common ancestor or if the trait evolved independently three separate times. She is a past recipient of the Mickey Scudder scholarship, which is administered by WGNSS.

We will meet at the St. Louis County Library Headquarters on Lindbergh Blvd. in Frontenac at 7:00 PM on Thursday, September 18. Remember, now that the library is no longer open on Fri. evenings, we meet on a variety of days. We hope to see you there on Thursday, September 18!

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Have You Renewed?

Please check the upper right-hand corner of your mailing label to see when your membership expires. If you've already sent in your dues over the summer, then Randy Korotev will have updated your expiration date to 2004. If your expiration date still says 2003, please send a check for \$20 payable to WGNSS to PO Box 190065, St. Louis, MO 63119. The October issue, which will be mailed in late September, will be the last issue you receive unless you have renewed for the Sept. 2003-Sept. 2004-membership year. If you have any questions about your membership status, contact Randy Korotev at 314-993-0055 or rlkorote@artsci.wustl.edu ☞

Welcome to New Members

Dawn Brooks	63104
Jane C. Allen.....	63126
Janet Williamson.....	63131
Nancy Matchett	63143
David Weber	63108

Dates for '03 Meetings

-  Thurs., Sept. 18, St. L. Co. L-HQ 7:00 PM
-  Tues., Oct. 7, St. L. Co. L-HQ 7:00 PM
-  Thurs., Nov. 20, St. L. Co. L-HQ 7:00 PM

Membership Chairperson Sought

Yvonne Homeyer

We have an opening on the Board for Membership Chairperson. Because the Treasurer keeps track of the membership list, our Membership position is more about membership development. The Membership Chairperson is responsible for making sure that WGNSS has a display table at appropriate nature/ environmental events in the St. Louis area. The Membership Chairperson also sends out the Welcome Letter to new members and keeps the WGNSS brochure up-to-date. In the fall, the Membership Chairperson coordinates a membership renewal effort aimed at members who did not renew over the summer. The tasks of the Membership Chairperson could be shared through a committee and the new Membership Chairperson will be encouraged and supported by the Board in the formation

of such a committee. If you are interested in joining the Board in this capacity, please contact Yvonne Homeyer at 314-963-7750 or homeyer@earthlink.net. The Board selects the Membership Chairperson.

We would like to thank Dianne Benjamin for her 3 years of service as our previous Membership Chairperson. Under her leadership, our membership program greatly expanded. Thanks, Dianne, for doing such a great job for WGNSS ☞

Volunteers needed for Sun. Bird Walks

Kent Lannert

Anyone who might like to lead a WGNSS/SLAS morning bird walk, please give Kent Lannert a call at 618-624-4464 or contact him by email at klannert@charter.net. It's the leader's choice as to where in the St. Louis area the trip goes. You need not be an expert to lead one of these trips but you should be familiar with the birding area in which you select to lead a trip. The leader can also select any open date for his or her trip. ☞

Next Deadline: September 5

Nature Notes publishes 10 issues a year, each mailed on the third Monday of the month. To allow time for layout, printing, etc., the deadline is always 10 days before that date. September begins on a Monday, so our next issue — the October issue — has the *earliest possible deadline*, Sept. 5. I'll be back at school starting mid-August so please note the change of email address from now till freedom returns June 1, 2004.

Submissions—handwritten or typed, e-mail, IBM or Mac to: Anne McCormack, 587 Andrews, St. Louis MO 63122-5722 or amccormack@stjosephacad.org ☞

August & September Bird Walks

Yvonne Homeyer

We have lots of birding trips in late August and September — 3 walks every week, to be precise! Beginners are always welcome. Birders with a variety of experience levels attend our walks, so everyone should feel comfortable. The leaders will be especially focused on participants who want assistance with identification. Our walks are not only learning experiences but also lots of fun! Most of our field trips are over

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by noon, but some leaders extend into the afternoon, so bring lunch and plenty of water just in case. Of course, you can leave whenever you need to.

There is a regular Thursday bird walk led by Jackie Chain. Meet at 8:00 AM at Des Peres Park on Ballas, one block north of Manchester. The group travels to various locations that will be announced that morning. For more information, call Jackie at 314-644-5998.

David Becher, our Ornithology Chairperson, is the Saturday leader. Check the calendar at the end of this newsletter for dates, meetings locations and times. For more information, call David at 314-576-1146.

Our Sunday bird walks are led by rotating leaders, coordinated by Kent Lannert, our Co-Chair of Ornithology, 618-624-4464. We have walks scheduled for every Sunday starting on August 17 through the end of September. Here are phone numbers for some of our Sunday leaders: Mike Brady on 8/31, 314-391-7631; Sherry McCowan on 9/7, 314-772-3133; Dave Rogles on 8/24, 636-936-0660.

A Hawk Watch is scheduled for September 28 at Mark Peters' prairie in Jefferson County. Meet at the prairie at 9:00 AM (directions 4). Mark has restored 6 acres of prairie and the prairie alone is worth the trip! Enjoy the late summer wildflowers and butterflies as well as the hawks.

Directions to these favorite birding locations are on page 17 of this issue. They're also available on our web site at www.wgnss.org, or you can call the trip leader. Our birding trips will take you to a variety of habitats for the maximum enjoyment of St. Louis's bird diversity. In Tower Grove Park we will be on the lookout for fall Neotropical migrant landbirds (warblers, vireos, flycatchers, etc.). Riverlands is the name given to the area around the lock and dam on the Mississippi at Alton—officially known as Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area. At Riverlands, we will have an opportunity to study shorebirds. If you're not sure what kind of birds are expected on any particular walk, the leader will be glad to fill you in ahead of time.

Want to know the latest bird sightings? Call our *Nature Line* at 314-935-8432 and listen to the recorded message kept up-to-date by

Sherry McCowan. Misplaced your newsletter? Check out the calendar on our web site, www.wgnss.org. Sherry also mentions upcoming bird walks on the Nature Line. Between our newsletter, web site and Nature Line, you're never far from WGNSS! ♡

Now Hear This!

Jim Adams

As newly appointed Historian I've organized the historical material received from various sources in a WGNSS Archives File. It's a start, but it's surprising how little information about the past years of WGNSS has survived other than a reasonably complete collection of Board meeting minutes (starting ca. 1963), a complete file of *Nature Notes* in bound volumes archived in the Missouri Botanical Garden's Library, and booklets prepared for the 50th and 75th anniversary celebrations. I have almost no programs from annual banquets in past years or correspondence relating to the numerous campaigns/programs/projects that WGNSS members have participated in during the long life of this venerable society. I do have a few audiovisual items and snapshots from past society activities, some newspaper articles, obituaries and other biographical information, but not really very much when one considers that WGNSS is now 83 years old. I'd like to get more of the items listed above plus information about books (and articles) written by WGNSS members to supplement the list printed in the April 11th Heritage Night program. Since this program was printed I've learned of numerous omissions and I want to complete this "WGNSS author" list as a chronicle of the literary contributions of WGNSS members to the natural history literature of Missouri and the nation. If you clean out your attics or closets and find information about WGNSS and/or its members, regardless of content or form, that you're willing to contribute, please contact me to arrange pickup. My telephone number is 314-961-2494 and my E-mail address is dadams5084@aol.com ♡

Members Remember Carol Loewe

WGNSS has lost another of its long-time, cherished members, Carol Loewe, who died last April. She will be fondly remembered for her dedication to the "hunt" of birding, and for her sharing of her enthusiasm with all her fellow "hunters."

She had served as a WGNSS officer and was an active member of many other organizations. Carol is greatly missed not just as a birding enthusiast, but a good companion and great friend to all.

Marjorie Richardson

I'd like to share a birding tale of Carol's—one that shows a little of her birding style and her storytelling talent. Some years ago, a Snowy Owl was reported at Lake Carlyle. More than once she had driven the 75 miles with nothing to show for it but gulls—and Carol was not fond of gulls. On the third try, she spotted a young boy who lived by the marina. She asked him if he'd ever seen a white owl there. "Yeah, I seen him. Up there on that lamp post. And I'll tell ya one thing, lady. If he's up there when I leave for school, he's up there when I come home. If he ain't there in the morning, he ain't there in the afternoon." Carol produced a \$5-dollar bill. "Next time you see him, you call me." He did, and Carol added the Snowy to her list.

Anne McCormack

Hawk Watch Sunday Sept. 28

Mark Peters will host a Hawk Watch on September 28 at his house in Imperial, Mo. This is a likely date to see hundreds of Broad-winged Hawks and other raptors migrating.

Go south on Tesson Ferry (Hwy. 21) and take the second exit (Old Hwy. 21) after crossing the Meramec R. Go 2.6 miles on Old Hwy. 21 and then turn left onto Lions Den Road. In about 1 mile, cross a bridge. Take the second of two unmarked, unpaved to the right immediately past the bridge (about 100 yards). Mark's house is about 1/2 mile up this road.

Once you turn onto this gravel road, pass a farmhouse with a red barn. It looks like a private driveway, but it is a road. Ignore the road branching off to the right. A short distance past that road, you come to the creek. Don't cross in cars. Park. The house is up the driveway on the left, but please park at the bottom on the

road. It's narrow, so scoot as far over as possible. Do not park on both sides of the road. To get to the prairie, *walk* across the creek.

One more point to help people find the correct gravel road: There will be a cluster of mailboxes. Mark's address is "5435" and there is a mailbox with that number marked on it at the turnoff from the paved Lions Den Road onto the unpaved and unmarked Lions Den Spur.

September 2003 Conservation Report

Yvonne Homeyer

Proposed Cement Plant: WGNSS has joined three other local organizations in appealing the issuance of a 404 permit to Holcim by the Corps of Engineers. By issuing the permit, the Corps was at the same time signaling its refusal to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, a large-scale study of direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of the proposed cement plant industrial complex on wildlife, wetlands, water quality and air quality. If the Corps believes that an EIS is not needed for a project of such gigantic proportions as this proposed project, then it is difficult—perhaps impossible—to imagine when an EIS would ever be required under the governing law known as NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act). Among those government agencies, public officials and national environmental organizations that have over the last 3 years asked the Corps to conduct the in-depth environmental study are: the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Missouri Dept. of Conservation, Governor Bob Holden, Congressman Lacy Clay (MO), Sen. Dick Durbin (IL), National Audubon Society, Environmental Defense, Natural Resources Defense Council, Sierra Club, National Wildlife Federation, Missouri Parks Association, and more. WGNSS is also challenging a mining permit requested by Holcim from the Mo. Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) department known as Land Reclamation. Joining WGNSS on these matters are the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, Ozark Chapter of the Sierra Club, and American Bottom Conservancy in the Metro East, IL area. We are represented by the Environmental Law Clinic of the Washington University School of Law. For more information on the three-year history of this proposed cement plant, quarry

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and harbor, consult our web site at www.wgnss.org and look under "Conservation Reports."

Pesticide Spraying Stops In University City: In June, the City Council of University City voted to stop pesticide spraying as a tool to control mosquitoes. University City has a very strong ordinance prohibiting standing water where mosquitoes breed ("source reduction"). Source reduction, larvaciding and public education and awareness – collectively called Integrated Pest Management—are the most efficient and least costly methods of mosquito control. Pesticide spraying is the least efficient method yet poses dangers to public health, birds, beneficial insects and other wildlife. The chemical sprayed in St. Louis County, permethrin, is a neurotoxin and can trigger asthma attacks. At the time this article is written in early August, no human cases of West Nile Virus have been reported in the St. Louis area, yet the health departments of St. Louis County, the City of St. Louis and other counties and municipalities began spraying on a regular basis in early summer. Mosquitoes develop resistance to these pesticides and spraying can kill other mosquito predators such as birds and large insects.

St. John's Bayou/New Madrid Floodway: The Missouri DNR did a flip-flop on this controversial proposed project to dry out many thousands of acres of Mississippi River flood plain and wetlands in the Bootheel to convert that land into agricultural cropland. Initially denying the 401 certification for this project, the DNR quickly reversed course after an appeal by the Corps of Engineers and gave the Corps its 401 certification. Environmental Defense and the Missouri Coalition for the Environment have filed a legal challenge to the DNR's decision. At stake are thousands of acres of flood plain and wetlands that are still connected to the Mississippi River and thus subject to its seasonal flooding, and the incredible diversity of fish, amphibians, birds and other wildlife that inhabit this area. If the project proceeds, the flood plain and wetlands will be cut off from the river. Big Oak Tree State Park, an island remnant of the vast bottomland forest that once grew in that area, would be impacted by the project ♡.

Spring Botanizing

Carl Darigo

After suffering through some severe winter weather, the Botany Group weekly Thursday trips thankfully entered the spring season with the following attending one or more weeks, Father James Sullivan, Dave Alspaugh, Jonathon Baer, Marvin Boisseau, Nancy & Wayne Clark, Jeanne Clauson, Carl Darigo, Pat & Jack Harris, Ty Harris, Nels Holmberg & grandson David Jespersen, Anne Kettler, Gladys & Ed Kullman, Louise Langbein, Jeannie & Jim Moe, Fran & Tom O'Gorman, Susan Orr, Ken Parker, Nathan Pate, Marge & Jim Ruschill, Susie & Dick Russell, Jane Schaefer, Meredith Schroeer, Pete Seale, Al Seppi, Bob Siemer, Rheba Symeonoglou, Kathy Thiele, James Trager, Betty Walters, Dave Weber and Amy Wegescheide.

March 6, Robertsville State Park, Franklin County— under cloudy, 30° skies, 10 harbinger of spring (*Erigenia bulbosa*) enthusiasts, including new member Jonathon Baer, scoured the boat ramp picnic area for these elusive flowers, but found zilch. Several 50° days early in the week showed promise, but Wednesday's sleet zapped the tiny plants. However, all was not lost, as some interesting finds were made along an old trail west of the boat ramp area. Sprouting green leaves of chickweed (*Stellaria media*), chervil (*Chaerophyllum procumbens*), Virginia spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*), gold-englow (*Rudbeckia laciniata*), and bedstraw (*Galium sp.*) were seen. James Trager pointed out the paired, embryonic, cotyledon leaves, formed from the seeds of the bedstraw plant. Spangle grass (*Chasmanthium latifolium*) was abundant along the trail; other grasses found were Virginia wild rye (*Elymus virginicus*) and wood reed (*Cinna arundinacea*). James also successfully responded to Father Sullivan's test on a tiny sycamore sapling (*Platanus occidentalis*). Father Sullivan collected several galls from dried *Boehmeria cylindrica* (false nettle) plants with the hope that enclosed insects could be grown and identified; unfortunately nothing emerged from the galls. Numerous Adam & Eve orchid (*Aplectrum hyemale*) leaves were spotted, as well as one, lone, flowering dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*).

March 13, Robertsville State Park, Franklin County—a promised 60° forecast failed to materialize, as nine persons walked east on the River Trail, under chilly, 45° skies. After Shaw Nature Reserve's Trail House trailheads were inaccessible due to muddy roads, the group opted to follow up last week's trip, this time finding numerous flowering harbingers. The only other flowering plants seen were silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*) and one field pennycress (*Thlaspi arvense*), the latter discovered by Betty Walters near a mound of deer scat. Ed Kullman found copious growths of hen of the woods (*Grifola frondosa*) and oyster mushroom (*Pleurotus ostreatus*) near and on a decaying log; both fungi are choice edibles, but unfortunately, were too decomposed to save for the pot. Ed also found sea-shell like, purplish common split gill (*Schizophyllum commune*), a common world-wide fungus and large lobes of thin-maze polypore (*Daedaleopsis confragosa*). Pat Harris spotted curly lichen (*Parmotrema hypotropum*), which frequently falls from branches, due to the loosely attached, bent-back lobes. Jack Harris came up with fruiting *Entodon seductrix* (glossy moss), which is abundant on soil and dead logs. Some time was spent keying privet (*Ligustrum sp.*), a shrub with tiny, black olive-like fruits; meanwhile Father Sullivan's *Morus rubra* (red mulberry) sapling test went unanswered.

March 20, Queeny Park, St. Louis County—cloudy and 60° was the setting as a group of nine went west and north of the Visitor Center on a variety of roads, trails and muddy paths. The park was active with horseback riders, dog walkers, runners and a variety of maintenance equipment, including tractors, trucks, and a crew clearing and mulching bush honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*). This week was the season's first with a variety of flowering plants, some of which were *Stellaria media* (common chickweed), *Draba verna* (vernal whitlow grass), *Holosteum umbellatum* (jagged chickweed), *Cardamine parviflora* (small flower bitter cress), *Erysimum repandum* (bushy wallflower), *Sibara virginica* (Virginia rock cress), *Dicentra cucullaria* (Dutchmen's breeches) and *Veronica polita* (wayside speedwell). Father Sullivan found both the black bud and brown bud versions of white ash (*Fraxinus americana*). Sharp-eyed Nels Holmberg answered tests on wahoo (*Euonymus atropurpureus*) and black locust

(*Robinia pseudo-acacia*), then found the very tiny, pygmy plume moss (*Fissidens exilis*); this eastern species, which grows on muddy, disturbed soil, is very rare in Missouri, the normal range being west to Illinois. Miscellaneous items found were a tennis ball, baseball, two golf balls and a deer skull.

March 27, Washington State Park, Washington County—a 65°, spring day with guarantees of many flowering plants, drew 17 attendees to parts of the 1000 Steps Trail and Big River bottomland. Among plants in bloom were *Androsace occidentalis* (western rock jasmine), *Anemonella thalictroides* (rue anemone), *Isopyrum biternatum* (lowland rue anemone), *Sanguinaria canadensis* (bloodroot), *Lindera benzoin* (spice bush), *Cardamine concatenata* (toothwort), *Erythronium albidum* (white trout lily), *Corydalis flavula* (pale corydalis), an abundance of *Claytonia virginica* (Virginia spring beauty) and plenty of *Hepatica nobilis* (sharp lobed hepatica). Bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) were ready to bloom and the hillside was covered with carpets of budding waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum canadense*) plants. Pat Harris and Marge Ruschill collaborated to answer a test on blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia verna*) leaves, and Pat later found the uncommon *Cardamine hirsuta* (hoary bitter cress). A sprig of non-native *Poa annua* (annual bluegrass) required later confirmation by microscopic examination of flower parts; native *P. chapmaniana* (Chapman bluegrass) is almost identical and difficult to separate in the field.

April 3, Pacific Palisades, Jefferson County—a nice crowd of 19, including new member Dave Weber, turned out on a summery 80° day. Some time was spent examining the minute differences in flower construction between *Prunus mexicana* (big tree plum) and *P. munsoniana* (wild goose plum). Seen along the gravel entrance road were *Thlaspi arvense* (field pennycress) and an undetermined chickweed (*Cerastium sp.*). Abundant in a fallow, farm field was the common chickweed (*Stellaria media*). Much spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) and common violet (*Viola sororia*) covered the bottomland forest. Also flowering in the forest were *Collinsia verna* (blue-eyed Mary), *Dicentra canadensis* (squirrel corn), *Erythronium albidum* (white trout lily), *Uvularia grandiflora* (large bellwort) and *Viola pubescens* (yellow violet). As seen in prior visits, the ver-

tical rock bluff base hosted *Mitella diphylla* (winterwort) and budding *Saxifraga pensylvanica* (Forbes' saxifrage).

April 10, Katy Trail State Park, St. Charles County—14 persons turned out on a pleasant, 65° day, walking northeast from the Weldon Spring trailhead. The parking lot area yielded several nice finds, including *Senecio glabellus* (butterweed), whose test was successfully answered by Jack Harris, *Descurainia pinnata* (tansy mustard), *Myosurus minimus* (mousetail) and *Buglossoides arvensis* (corn gromwell). Nels Holmberg pointed out the purple, male catkins of cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*). Seen along the trail were *Ranunculus abortivus* (small flower buttercup), *Phlox divaricata* (blue phlox), *Arabis laevigata* (smooth rock cress), *Erysimum repandum* (bushy wallflower), *Uvularia grandiflora* (large bellwort), *Asarum canadense* (wild ginger) and *Triosteum illinoense* (Illinois horse gentian). Kathy Thiele identified her favorite *Erigeron*, *E. philadelphicus* (Philadelphia fleabane), while Pat Harris spotted two flowering trees, sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) with yellow blossoms and American bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*) sporting cream-colored flowers. Tom O'Gorman saw a red admiral butterfly (*Vanessa rubria*), while Father Sullivan found the willow leaf beetle (*Chrysomela knabi*) on sandbar willow (*Salix exigua*), near where the trail approaches the Missouri River.

April 17, St. Francois State Park, St. Francois County—: a chilly, 60° drizzle stopped just in time for 14 people, including new member Meredith Schroer, to check out parts of the Missouri and Swimming Deer Trails. Completing the primary objective of the trip, Jack Harris spotted the first bluebell (*Mertensia virginica*), then many more were abundant in the Big River bottomland. Also present in some quantity were *Phlox divaricata* (blue phlox), *Trillium recurvatum* (purple trillium), *Glechoma hederacea* (ground ivy), along with a large patch of *Veratrum woodii* (false hellebore) leafy plants, getting ready to bloom later in the summer. Other notable species seen were *Viola striata* (pale violet), *V. pubescens* (yellow violet), *Camassia scilloides* (wild hyacinth), *Nothoscordum bivalve* (false garlic), *Hydrastis canadensis* (golden seal), *Antennaria parlinii* (pussy toes) and *Hybanthus concolor* (green violet). Ed Kull-

man went part way up a steep cliff to find red flowers of fire pink (*Silene virginica*). Two colorful trees in full bloom were pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) with dark brown flowers and Ohio buckeye (*Aesculus glabra*) with big, yellowish-orange blossoms. Kathy Thiele brought gooseberry pie and Gladys Kullman persimmon pudding to augment lunch for the troops.

April 24, Shaw Nature Reserve, Franklin County—a cold, 50° rain luckily abated, as James Trager guided a small party of three, over the Labadie Trace Trail, and parts of the River and Wildflower Trails. Before starting, Father Sullivan spotted *Galium pedemontanum* (foothill bedstraw) adjacent to the Trail House parking area; these small, non-native plants have long, bristly hairs and tiny, yellow flowers. A virtual cornucopia of colorful, flowering plants were seen. Some of the more notable included *Nemastylis geminiflora* (prairie iris), *Amsornia illustris* (shining blue star), *Smilax ecirrhata* (carrion flower), *Orobancha uniflora* (one-flowered cancer root), *Iris cristata* (crested iris) and *Clematis fremontii* (Fremont's leather flower). Among other species found were *Zizia aurea* (golden alexanders), *Astragalus distortus* (Ozark milk vetch), *Comandra umbellata* (rock toadflax), *Castilleja coccinea* (red Indian paintbrush), *Dodecatheon meadia* (shooting star), *Delphinium tricorne* (dwarf larkspur), *Erysimum capitatum* (western wallflower), *Senecio plattensis* (prairie ragwort) and *Arenaria patula* (sandwort). Sedges just forming fruit were *Carex cephalophora* (oval-headed sedge) and *C. blanda* (woodland sedge), and also seen was *Eleocharis palustris* (long head spike rush). James pointed out a large field of invasive Dahurian buckthorn (*Rhamnus davurica*), which so far has defied removal attempts.

May 1, Babler State Park, St. Louis County—umbrellas and raincoats were in use, as a surprisingly large group of 12, including 1st timer Jane Schaefer, braved a 70° rain to walk the gated road at the park's north end. Abundant along the roadside were *Phacelia purshii* (Miami mist) and the non-native *Barbarea vulgaris* (yellow rocket). The *Calycanthus floridus* (strawberry shrub) was in full bloom, with large, fragrant, purplish flowers. Several other plants of interest were *Geum vernum*, whose test was successfully answered by Nels Holm-

berg, *Hordeum pusillum* (little barley), *Valerianella radiata* (corn salad), leaves of which Kathy Thiele nibbled and pronounced very tasty, and *Sanicula odorata* (clustered snakeroot).

Cyperaceae season began in earnest, with *Carex jamesii* (James' sedge), *C. muhlenbergii* (Muhlenberg's sedge), *C. oligocarpa* (few fruited sedge) and *C. sparganioides* (bur reed sedge) being found. Father Sullivan identified one of his favorite flea beetles, *Dibolia sinuata*, on *Dasistoma microphylla* (mullein foxglove) leaves, and also a reddish version of *Metriorhynchomiris dislocatus*, a plant bug, feeding on a flowering sedge. Ed Kullman spotted several brown fungi, hard agrocybe (*Agrocybe dura*), which are generally considered non-edible. After the tour ended, Kathy distributed some very tasty candy she had made from ginger root (*Asarum canadense*).

May 8, Rockwoods Reservation, St. Louis County—while several members were on a spring trip to Arkansas, 11 people, including new member Susan Orr, gathered on a cloudy, but otherwise nice day to check out an old maintenance road, then a glade area off the paved trail overlooking the Visitor Center. Amid the tangled vegetation of the unused road were seen pale violet (*Viola striata*), purple trillium (*Trillium recurvatum*), spring avens (*Geum vernum*), pineapple weed (*Matricaria discoidea*), Miami mist (*Phacelia purshii*), woolen breeches (*Hydrophyllum appendiculatum*) and hispid buttercup (*Ranunculus hispidus*). Interesting plants found along the paved trail were dwarf larkspur (*Delphinium tricornis*), yellow pimpernel (*Taenidia integerrima*), green violet (*Hybanthus concolor*), orange puccoon (*Lithospermum canescens*), climbing milkweed (*Matelea decipiens*) and pale beard tongue (*Pentstemon pallidus*).

May 15, Kullman Property, Warren County— an early morning rain changed to a sunny 70° day, as Gladys & Ed Kullman graciously hosted 11 others, including 1st timer Nathan Pate, for a tour of their Warren County property. The rich lowland woods located on a tributary of Charrette Creek had many nice plants. Yellow lady's slipper orchids (*Cypripedium calceolus*) were in full bloom, and in some places care was needed not to trample baby plants, as well as budding large tway-blade orchids (*Liparis liliifolia*). Not quite blooming were Michigan lily (*Lilium michi-*

ganense) and ragged orchis (*Platanthera lacera*). Among other interesting plants seen were *Camassia scilloides* (wild hyacinth), *Tragopogon dubius* (goat's beard), *Tradescantia virginiana* (Virginia spiderwort), *Cynoglossum virginianum* (wild comfrey), *Arisaema triphyllum* (Jack-in-the-pulpit), *Maianthemum racemosum* (false Solomon's seal) and much *Asplenium platyneuron* (ebony spleenwort). Sedges present included *Carex sparganioides* (bur reed), *C. retroflexa* (reflexed), *C. oligocarpa* (few fruited) and *C. radiata* (stellate). Also found in several locations were black, cuplike, devil's urn fungi (*Urnula craterium*).

May 22, St. Joe State Park, St. Francois County—a very pleasant 70° was on hand as eight persons toured the asphalt trail eastward from Blankshire Trailhead. Two unusual plants shared the spotlight, *Apocynum androsaemifolium* (spreading dogbane) and the native *Cirsium carolinianum* (Carolina thistle). Father Sullivan first spotted the spreading habit of the dogbane, then photographer Al Seppi found a plant with the delicate, white, pink striped flowers. Other nice species seen included *Parthenium integrifolium* (American feverfew), *Verbena simplex* (narrow leaf vervain), *Lithospermum canescens* (orange puccoon), *Orbexilum pedunculatum* (Sampson's snakeroot), *Krigia biflora* (false dandelion), *Dioscorea villosa* (wild yam), *Scutellaria australis* (small skullcap), *Scirpus georgianus* (smooth common bulrush), *Carex frankii* (bristly cattail sedge) and *C. granularis* (pale sedge), the latter with pale, glaucous leaves. Pat Harris successfully answered a "leaves only" purple milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*) test, but all were later fooled on Father Sullivan's unusual two-headed beebalm test (*Monarda bradburiana*). Tom O'Gorman pointed out several red-spotted purple butterflies (*Basilarchia astyanax*) and Jeanne Clauson found an accomodating yellowbelly racer (*Coluber flaviventris*).

May 29, Valley View Glades, Jefferson County—a group of 13, including Nels Holmberg's two year old grandson David Jespersen, and new member Rheba Symeonoglou, enjoyed 75° sunny weather to tour the glades. Prior to leaving the parking area, a brief survey of the Highway B road shoulder turned up *Oenothera macrocarpa* (Missouri primrose), *Rosa carolina* (pasture rose), *Tradescantia ohioensis* (Ohio spiderwort), *Asclepias viridis* (green-

flowered milkweed), *Panicum linearifolium* (slender leaf panic grass) and *Scutellaria leonardii* (Leonard's skullcap). Along the forest trail were seen *Carex retroflexa* (reflexed sedge) and *Panicum boscii* (bearded broad-leaf panic grass). Yellow flowers of Missouri primrose and tickseed coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*) were plentiful on the glade, as well as lavender prairie turnip (*Pedimelum esculentum*), but very few pale purple cone flowers (*Echinacea simulata*) were present. Goat's beard (*Aruncus dioicus*), blue false indigo (*Baptisia australis*), rockrose (*Helianthemum canadense*) and fruiting Fremont's leather flower (*Clematis fremontii*) plants were seen, as were the edible fruits of ground plum (*Astragalus crassicaarpus*). *Carex crawei* (long stalk sedge) was spotted and *Eleocharis compressa* (flat stem spike rush) was abundant in some locations.

Thanks to Pat & Jack Harris who contributed information for this article ♡

More about Big Day 5/10/03

Anne McCormack

A number of folks noticed oversights and unreported birds in the article on Big Day that appeared in the last issue. Final totals will be reported next month. Here's the update:

Common Loon	Riverlands	Eads & Malone
American Bittern	C Cannon NWR	Eads & Malone
Lesser Scaup	Riverlands	Eads & Malone
Greater Scaup	Horseshoe Lake	Jim Ziebol documented, 2 males, 1 female on 203 side
Canvasback	Horseshoe	Ziebol
N. Pintail	Horseshoe	Holmes & Wetteroth
Ring-necked Duck	Horseshoe	Holmes & Wetteroth
Am. Woodcock	Busch	Eads & Malone
Yellow-crowned	Night-Heron	Wilson Pk, Granite C Holmes & Wetteroth
Sora	Collinsville Rd.	Barber
Snow Goose	Horseshoe L	Barber
Marsh Wren	Horseshoe	Ziebol; Prairie Slough
Bank Swallow	several places	Eads & Malone
Prothonotary W	Horseshoe	Holmes & Wetteroth; C Cannon
		Eads & Malone



Nature Notes is printed on recycled paper.

September 2003 

May 2003 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 Environmental Demonstration Area

SNR = Shaw Nature Reserve (Arboretum)

TGP = Tower Grove Park

Early Arrival Dates:

- 5/10 Least Tern, REDA (m. ob.); Willow Flycatcher, REDA (m. ob.); Common Tern, REDA (JE); Black-throated Blue, BCA (KR, AM)
- 5/11 Lazuli Bunting, TGP (LB, J Ck, DB); again on 5/12 (JZ)
- 5/13 King Rail, Least Bittern, Prairie Slough (PH)
- 5/14 Alder Flycatcher, Katy Trail (CM)
- 5/17 Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Fenton (T Bo)
- 5/25 Ruddy Turnstone, REDA (A&BM); Common Moorhen, Clarence Cannon (JM); Whimbrel, REDA (DK)

Introduction: During May, many of you may have seen Jim Rathert at the Gaddy Bird Garden in TGP. Jim, who is the photographer for the Mo. Dept. of Conservation, spent a week taking photographs at the bubbler as well as at Margy Terpstra's back yard. He characterized the bubbler in the Gaddy Bird Garden as the best place he's ever seen to photograph land birds. One birder recorded Mourning Warbler 9 days in a row at the end of May in TGP. Many birders between 5/24 and 5/28 saw Connecticut Warbler there. Another Connecticut was found on the 21st in Forest Park. Several species, including the *Oporornis* warblers and *Empidonax* flycatchers, are migrating well into the first week of June, as birders are discovering. We want to thank the Riverlands managers for creating such good habitat for migrating shorebirds this spring. Several cold fronts created adverse winds and made May a very interesting month.

Sightings: A Least Bittern was seen on the Katy Trail on 5/27 (LY). Mike Thelen found an Am. Bittern at the Borrow Pit, HL, on 5/3, and had a Little Blue Heron in the meadow at Castlewood on 5/4. Torrey Berger counted 78 Great Blue Herons at Alta Villa Road on 5/19. About 28 Little Blue Herons were seen at In-

dian Lake (old Collinsville Golf Course) on 5/1 (T Be) and 40 were estimated there on 5/3 (SM). Two Greater White-fronted Geese were found at REDA on 5/1 (J&CM). Mark Mittelman reported a female Common Merganser at REDA on 5/18. On 5/10, a Snow Goose was seen at HL (LB). On 5/10, there were 4 Black-necked Stilts, a Least Tern, Willow Flycatcher and Virginia Rail at REDA (CA, m. ob.). Doug Willis found a White-faced Ibis there on 5/25. Twenty Semipalmated Plovers were seen at REDA on 5/1 and 7 Black-bellied Plovers were there on 5/10 (J&CM). Two Whimbrels were a good find at REDA on 5/25 (DK, m. ob.). Two Hudsonian Godwits were observed at REDA on 5/26 (CM). A male Red-necked Phalarope was first seen at REDA on 5/23 (KL, SC, FH) and on 5/26, a male and female were seen together (SM, JM, JU). John & Nancy Solodar reported 50+ Greater Yellowlegs, 100+ Lesser Yellowlegs, and 25 Great Blue Herons at MTC on 5/2. Good counts of shorebirds at REDA included 5 Wilson's Phalaropes, 5 Willets, and 2 Sanderlings on 5/5 (CA). Connie also reported over 100 Semipalmated Sandpipers, a Stilt Sandpiper, 10 Dunlin, 4 Common Terns, and a Black Tern on 5/21 at REDA. On 5/6, Shawn Clubb saw a Virginia Rail perched on a plant stalk on I-55/70 west of Hwy. 111. Gull sightings included 2 Laughing Gulls and 3 Franklin's Gulls at REDA on 5/10 (LB) and 2 Bonaparte's were seen there on 5/2 (CA). At REDA on 5/5, Jeannie Moe reported 2 Black-bellied Plovers, 8 Franklin's Gulls, 200 Lesser Yellowlegs, 8 Caspian Terns, 6 Forster's Terns and 2 female Hooded Mergansers. There were multiple Mississippi Kite sightings in May, including 1 at TGP on 5/7 (T Be), 2 at his home on 5/8 at his home (CA), 1 in TGP on 5/9 (MR), an immature in Crestwood on 5/10 (JZ, YH), 1 in Kirkwood on 5/12 (MAA), 6 at Prairie Slough on 4/13 (PH), 2 in TGP on 5/15 (MR), 1 at his home on 5/20 (D Bz), 2 soaring over TGP on 5/21 (Joe Pinnell), 2 on 5/22 east of the Gaddy Bird Garden (Jim Rathert, BW, JZ, and Jim Hickner), 1 at Young C.A. on 5/26 (JZ) and a Merlin harassing the Kites over TGP on 5/26 (MR). A Peregrine Falcon was observed in TGP on 5/14 (T Be); another Peregrine, *tundrius* form, was filmed on video at REDA on 5/30 (YH, BK, JZ, LB). A Merlin flew in front of his car on the Levee Road on 5/3 (JZ). A Chuck-widow's-widow, perched on a horizontal Elm

limb, was photographed and videotaped on 5/25 at HL (FH, BW, JZ). On 5/19, 20 Night-hawks were seen at Page & Hanley (MT).

Black-billed Cuckoos were well-reported in May, with 6 seen in FP between 5/2 and 5/26 (RK); other sightings included 1 at Castlewood on 5/2 (DB & WGNSS Group), on 5/2 at TGP (SM), on 5/12 at Weldon Spring C.A. (P&BJ), on 5/20 at Shaw N.R. (P&BJ), on 5/24 at TGP (Wade Pearson) and a very interesting sighting in the Gaddy Bird Garden at TGP of an adult Black-billed Cuckoo with a fledgling (LB). Sadly, a dead adult Black-billed Cuckoo was found near the stables (SM). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were sighted in Fenton on 5/17 (T Bo) and at REDA on 5/19 (MM). Western Kingbirds were observed in E. St. Louis on 5/4, along with Bobolinks at HL (JC & WGNSS Group). New locations for Western Kingbird include Alton Barge on 5/24 (BW), 2 near 2nd & 3rd & Shenandoah on 5/31 (John Newman). On 5/19, Ian Hunt observed Olive-sided Flycatcher in TGP and on 5/21, Jim Rathert obtained excellent photographs of one (MR, Joe Pinnell). Bewick's Wrens were seen at Shaw N.R. on 5/14 and 5/20 (P&BJ). Randy Korotev and Nick Barber found 25-30 Swainson's Thrush in FP on 5/5. On 5/2, Claudia Spener observed Veery and Yellow-billed Cuckoo in TGP. A Veery and Wilson's Warbler were found in TGP on 5/7 (MM). On 5/25, the Barkers found a Veery in the Gaddy Bird Garden in TGP. On 5/17, Swainson's, Gray-cheeked, Veery and Wood Thrush came to the bubbler in TGP (A&BM). Two female Bluebirds were seen in the large meadow south of the Bird Garden in TGP on 5/21 (G&LW); a male Bluebird had been seen there earlier in the month.

A Philadelphia Vireo was observed in TGP on 5/21 (BW). Bell's Vireo sightings included 1 in E. St. Louis on 5/3 (SW), 1 at the Borrow Pit, HL (SM), 1 at HL on 5/4 (DB), 1 at FP on 5/5 (RK), and 1 at Weldon Spring C.A. on 5/6 (P&BJ). On 5/2, 50+ Yellow-rumped Warblers and 20 Palm Warblers were seen on Walker Island, HL (BW) and on 5/2, in TGP, there were 20 Ruby-crowned Kinglets and 20 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (NB). Mike Brady counted 4 Cerulean Warblers and 5 Prothonotary Warblers at Castlewood on 5/3. On 5/25, Ian Hunt found 5-6 Ceruleans and an Alder Flycatcher at LVT. On 5/5, there were 15 warbler species in FP, including Redstart, Blackburnian, Magnolia

and Blackpoll (RK). Paul & Barbara Johnson found 2 Prairie at Weldon Spring C.A. on 5/6. On 5/9, there were 15 warbler species, 4 Scarlet Tanagers and a Black-billed Cuckoo seen in FP (RK). Two Mourning Warblers were seen by many in TGP on 5/8 (NB), and at the end of the month Mick Richardson saw Mourning Warblers 9 days in a row. Connecticut Warblers were observed in FP on 5/5 and 5/21 (RK), in TGP on 5/17 (T Bo), in Wilson Park, Granite City, on 5/18 (FH), and in TGP on 5/25 (Jurek Majka), on 5/26 (ML), on 5/27 (JZ), and on 5/28 (Mick Richardson). On 5/5, at Point DuSable Park in St. Charles, there were 2 Louisiana Waterthrush, Blackpoll & Golden-winged Warblers, Wood Thrush, and Fish Crow (JM). Henslow's Sparrows were reported from BCA on 5/8 (CM) and several were seen in Castlewood (MB). Two Lark Sparrows were found at MTC on 5/24 (Mary Regan, JM). On 5/28, Chipping and White-throated Sparrow were seen in TGP (BW, SM). Two Harris's Sparrows in breeding plumage were observed on 5/3 on Blue Grosbeak Trail (A&BM). Dan Kassebaum found 2 male and 1 immature male Painted Buntings in E. St. Louis on 5/21, and on 5/10, Painted Buntings were found at the Katy Trail Access (DC, JCK, RAB). A female Lazuli Bunting was seen in TGP on 5/11 (LB, JCK, DB). On 5/18, 30 Bobolinks, a Henslow's Sparrow and 2 Prairie Warblers were found on the Blue Grosbeak Trail (MT, MAA). On 5/19, the Thurs. Group found 2 Mississippi Kites & 3 Scarlet Tanagers in TGP, 2 more Kites over Hwy. 40, and the Painted Bunting in St. Charles Co. On 5/17, the Sat. Group found Blue Grosbeak on the Bl. Grosbeak Trail and Grasshopper Sparrow in Chesterfield Valley (DB). On 5/25, the Sat. Group saw Bobolinks at the Blue Grosbeak Trail, a Broad-winged Hawk in BCA and Grasshopper Sparrow was again seen in Chesterfield (DB).

A typical day at Blue Grosbeak Trail on 5/3 included Harris' Sparrow, LeConte's Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, juvenile or female Yellow-headed Blackbird and Willet (A&BM). A typical day at Riverlands on 5/25 for the Saturday Group included 14 species of shorebirds (2 Whimbrels, Ruddy Turnstone, 20 Black-bellied Plover, 120 Dunlin), 5 species of gulls (Laughing, Franklin's, Bonaparte's), 3 terns (Black,

Caspian and Common), and more (BR, leader). A typical day at SNR on 5/17 included numerous Yellow-throated Vireo, Summer Tanagers and House Wrens, lower-than-expected numbers of Blue-winged Warbler, and no sign of a Prairie Warbler (DB); brush clearance and cedar removal has at least temporarily changed the habitat there.

Comments: Pat Lueders found Black-throated Green, Chestnut-sided, Redstart, Nashville, Blackpoll, Black-and-white, Swainson's Thrush, Cooper's Hawk, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, and Yellow-billed Cuckoo in her yard on 5/12. Connie Alwood saw Black-billed Cuckoo and Least Flycatcher in his yard on 5/6. Margy Terpstra had up to 50 species on any given day in May, bringing her yard total to 127 and her bubbler total to 82. She also reported Barred Owl on 5/9. Mike Grant reported the following window-strike fatalities at the IBM Building: Yellow-billed Cuckoo, White-crowned Sparrow and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Gail Ahumada found Yellow and Wilson's Warbler in her yard in late May. The Spring Bird Count on 5/10 in Madison County, IL, which included HL, reported Common Loon, 12 species of ducks (3 Greater Scaup, Canvasback and Pintail), Marsh Wren, 25 Black Terns, 15 Forsters' Terns, and 1 Caspian Tern.

Contributors: Gail Ahumada, Connie Alwood, Mary Anne Auer, Bob Bailey, Loy Barber, Nick Barber, George & Terry Barker, Paul Bauer, David Becher, Torrey Berger, Rose Ann Bodman, Dennis Bozzay, Mike Brady, Jackie Chain, Shawn Clubb, Dick Coles, Jean Cook, Jack Cowan, Joe Eades, Bill Ford, David Garcia, Patrick Harrison, Frank Holmes, Yvonne Homeyer, Ian Hunt, Paul & Barbara Johnson, Dan Kassebaum, Wilma Kennell, Bob Kleiger, Kent Lannert, Pat Lueders, Mark Lund, Jim & Charlene Malone, Anne McCormack, Sherry McCowan, Alex & Brian Meilleur, Mark Mittleman, Jeannie Moe, Kraig Paradise, Mark Peters, Kevin Renick, Margie Richardson, Mick Richardson, David Rogles, Bill Rudden, John & Nancy Solodar, Claudia Spener, Margy Terpstra, Mike Thelen, Josh Uffman, Jane Walker, Bruce Waterish, Steve Whitworth, Rad Widmer, George & Linda Wilson, Linda Yust, Jim Ziebol. An asterisk means "documented." ☞

June 2003 Bird Report

Jim Ziebol & Yvonne Homeyer

Sightings. On 6/4, Frank Holmes found a Common Loon at HL. Many people reported up to 90 Pelicans at REDA during May. A Least Bittern was found at Prairie Slough on 6/7 (MT). A Yellow-crowned Night Heron was seen on Lindell west of Kingshighway in FP on 6/3 (RAB, J Ch). 80 Great Egrets were found at HL on 6/3 (FH). The Thursday Group of WGNSS found 2 Semipalmated Plovers at REDA on 6/3 (J Ch). Two Snow Geese, 2 Ring-necked Ducks and 2 Mute Swans were present at HL on 6/12 (FH). Other summering ducks included 2 Redheads on 6/12 and 2 Green-winged Teal on 6/9 at HL (FH), Canvasback at REDA on 6/9 (FH), a pair of Blue-winged Teal near HL on 6/29 (FH), and a pair of Blue-winged Teal at Busch (D Bz). A Least Tern was sighted at REDA on 6/1 (SM). On 6/7, a Forster's Tern, Black Terns, a Caspian Tern and 6 Franklin's Gulls were observed at REDA (CA). Fifteen Black Terns and 3 Common Terns were seen at HL on 6/4 (FH). David Becher found 30 Black Terns, 1 Common Tern and 10 Franklin's Gulls at REDA on 6/5 and on 6/26, 2 Caspian Terns were seen there (FH). David Becher reported a Bald Eagle at 6/22 at the Katy Trail Access. The nesting Cooper's Hawks in a Granite City park produced 3 young (FH). The Illinois Audubon Society saw 5 Mississippi Kites near Alton on 6/1. The first migrating shorebirds were reported on 6/30 including Willet, 5 Lesser Yellowlegs, 4 Pectoral Sandpipers, Least Sandpiper, Least Tern, 6 Common Terns and 8 Caspian Terns at CL (DK). Black-billed Cuckoos were sighted at REDA on 6/5 (J Ch, Thursday Group) and at the Olin Nature Reserve on 6/7 (MT, BR). Mike Brady estimated 14 Whip-poor-wills and 6 Chuck-will's-widows at Castelwood on 6/8. There were 50+ Tree Swallows on the road at HL on 6/26 (JZ). Jeannie Moe found Willow Flycatcher and Red-shouldered Hawk at Busch on 6/28.

Hooded Warblers were seen at LVT on 6/1 (MT) and at FP on 6/1 (J. Farm). A Mourning and a Connecticut Warbler were found on 6/1 at Castlewood (MB) and 2 female Mourning and a female Connecticut were seen in TGP on 6/5 (JU). On 6/15, 8 Henslow's Sparrows, Blue Grosbeak, and Bell's Vireo were seen at the Chubb Trail in Castlewood (MB) and Henslow's were found at Robertsville SP on 6/27 (J

Ch, Thurs. group). Lark Sparrows were seen on 6/1 on Bowles Road, Labadie Bottoms (DB) and on 6/9 at Busch (RK). A Blue Grosbeak was seen at Busch on 6/1, along with Willow and Olive-sided Flycatcher (MT). Rose Ann Bodman and Jackie Chain found Blue Grosbeak at Busch behind Hampton Lake on 6/21 and they also saw 2 Cerulean, 1 Yellow-throated and N. Parula at LVT. Sherry McCowan had good looks at a female Blue Grosbeak at Robertsville SP on 6/21. White-throated Sparrow was seen at TGP through 6/7 (m. ob.) and a late migrant was seen at Castlewood SP on 6/14 (MB). Two singing immature Painted Buntings, Bell's Vireo and Bewick's Wren were found in E. St. Louis on 6/21 (SM). Many observers, including Margy Terpstra, Tina Weyman, and Dennis Bozzay, saw Painted Buntings at the Katy Trail access. Late sightings of migrating birds in TGP included 2 Mississippi Kites, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, E. Wood Pewee, Great-crested Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Swainson's Thrush, Redstart, and Canada Warbler on 6/5 (SH). On 6/19, Jackie Chain and the Thurs. group saw Prairie Warbler at Hawn SP, and Prairie Warbler and a Chat at St. Francois SP. A typical day at LVT on 6/4 included Barred Owl, 2 Yellow-billed Cuckoos, 4 Acadian Flycatchers, 1 E. Kingbird, 4 Wt-breasted Nuthatches, 3 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, 2 Wood Thrush, 2 White-eyed Vireos, 6 Warbling Vireos, 2 Red-eyed Vireos, 2 N. Parulas, Redstart, 3 Worm-eating Warblers, 2 Kentucky Warblers, 3 Common Yellowthroats, 3 Chats, Summer Tanager, and 2 Baltimore Orioles (T Be).

Comments: On 6/4, Gail Ahumada found these probable nesters in TGP: Mississippi Kite, Great-crested Flycatcher, Pewee and Barn Swallow. Mike Brady found a Cardinal feeding a Cowbird and an Acadian Flycatcher, a Redstart, and a Gnatcatcher scolding a Black Rat Snake in Castlewood on 6/1. Kraig Paradise and Dennis Bozzay reported Brown Thrasher and Gray Catbirds in their yards. On 6/11, Linda Yust reported a Waterthrush, N. Parula, Green Heron and Black-crowned Night Heron in her yard. A leucistic Dickcissel was found along Bend Road, HL on 6/23 (T Be).

Contributors: Gail Ahumada, Connie Alwood, Loy Barber, George & Terry Barker, David Becher, Torrey Berger, Rose Ann Bodman, Dennis Bozzay, Mike Brady, Jackie Chain,

Frank Holmes, Dan Kassebaum, Sherry McCowan, Jeannie Moe, Kraig Paradise, Margy Terpstra, Mike Thelen, Josh Uffman, Linda Yust, Jim Ziebol. An asterisk means "documented." For abbreviations, see p. 9.

Please submit sightings by the last day of the month to Jim Ziebol (314-781-7372) or Yvonne Homeyer (homeyer@earthlink.net) ☞

July 2003 Bird Report

Jim Ziebol & Yvonne Homeyer

Introduction: In the Christmas Count data reported in *American Birds* for 2002-2003, David B. Johnson reported from Illinois that Crows suffered a 57% decline, Bluejays declined by 35%, and Black-capped Chickadees declined by 33% over last year. This sudden decline is most likely related to last year's outbreak of West Nile Virus. Just drive by the Waste Management Landfill near Horseshoe Lake and notice that near-absence of birds that used to be numerous.

Sightings: The Barkers found a Least Bittern at HL on 7/5 and on 7/12, they saw a Common Moorhen there. High counts of herons and egrets at HL included 1500+ Great Egrets on 7/26, 285 Snowy Egrets on 7/24, 350 Little Blue Herons on 7/25, and 110 Black-Crowned Night Herons on 7/25 (FH). Duck sightings included Blue-winged Teal near HL on 7/5 (FH), Ruddy Duck at HL (m. ob.), and a Canvasback at REDA on 7/30 (JU). Jack Cowan observed Common Moorhen and 45 Pied-billed Grebes at HL on 7/13, and 75 Pied-billed Grebes were there on 7/22 (FH). An Avocet was a good find at REDA on 7/26 (T Be). David Becher found Short-billed Dowitchers, Stilt Sandpipers, Lesser Yellowlegs, Least Sandpipers and Spotted-Sandpipers at REDA on 7/4. On 7/11, there were 30 Least Sandpipers and a Wilson's Phalarope at REDA (CM). Two Stilt Sandpipers and 2 Western Sandpipers were observed at very close range at HL on 7/26 (SM, JZ). A Willet was found at HL on 7/27 (FH). Mike Brady saw a Woodcock at Castlewood on 7/11. On 7/24, Frank Holmes found a Laughing Gull among the 100+ Ring-billed Gulls at HL. On 7/5, there were 3 Least Terns and 1 Caspian Tern seen at REDA (J&CM). Two Common Terns were observed at HL on 7/9 (JZ). Black and Common Terns

were seen at HL on 7/28 (FH). On 7/10, the Thursday Group found 2 Caspian Terns at REDA (J Ch et al.). A Mississippi Kite was seen at the Green Center in University City on 7/10 (MP). Jane Walker and others observed 7 Mississippi Kites at Tyson on 7/14, and 3 were seen in Des Peres on 7/10 (MR). Other Kite sightings included Warson Woods on 7/24 and 7/31 (DB) and Ron Goetz had one at his home in Town & Country. Kraig Paradise saw 2 recently fledged Western Kingbirds off Hall Street on 7/30. A colony of Bank Swallows and Grasshopper Sparrows were found in Chesterfield Valley on 7/6 (MAA). On 7/29, Dennis Bozzay observed 4 Fish Crows and 2 Yellow-billed Cuckoos at BCA. The Thurs. group found singing Sedge Wrens at REDA on 7/17 (J Ch). A Bell's Vireo was seen at BCA on 7/20 (D Bz). Grasshopper Sparrows were seen at Columbia Bottoms on 7/31 (MG). On 7/4, Jackie Chain and Vivian Liddell saw the Painted Bunting at the Katy Trail Access; the bird was also seen by Mike Grant on 7/11, along with a Lark Sparrow. Mike Brady observed 2 Painted Buntings near Catawissa in Jefferson Co. on 7/2.

A typical day on 7/30 in the Metro East Area included Common Moorhen, Western Sandpiper, Laughing Gull, 3 Western Kingbirds, and a banded male Painted Bunting; 4 Monk Parakeets, 2 Osprey at CL; and a Broad-winged Hawk at Pere Marquette SP (DK, KM, IOS Group). A typical day on the Levee Road on 7/13 included many Song Sparrows, Indigo Buntings, Dickcissels and Common Yellowthroats. A Little Blue Heron, Hooded Merganser and a Blue Grosbeak were also seen there (SM).

Comments: On 7/1, Bob Bailey saw a Cooper's Hawk catch a Robin near his home. Another Cooper's Hawk was seen in Margaret Gilleo's yard on 7/13 (MG, JZ, YH). Josh Uffman had a Pileated Woodpecker and a Screech Owl at his home on 7/22. Anne McCormack reported that a Brown Thrasher nested in her Kirkwood yard. At HL, Frank Holmes found 13 Turkey chicks on 7/9, a Moorhen chick on 7/3, and 3 young Coots on 7/6.

Jim Ziebol has updated 3 checklists for the St. Louis area. Horseshoe Lake picked up 2 new species in May, 2003 – Cinnamon Teal and Chuck-will's-widow—and now leads the area

with 305 species. Busch Wildlife now stands at 296, picking up new species such as Clark's Nutcracker, Surf Scoter, Oldsquaw (that's much more romantic than Long-tailed Duck), Mississippi Kite, and Yellow Crowned Night Heron since the last revision in 1996. Riverlands has about 285 species and we would like to encourage more reports of landbird sightings there, especially Neotropical migrants. Ron Goetz and Frank Holmes, former and current compilers for Madison County, respectively, provided information, along with Randy Korotev, Bill Rudden, Mike Flieg and other WGNSS members.

Contributors: Gail Ahumada, Connie Alwood, Mary Anne Auer, Loy Barber, George & Terry Barker, David Becher, Torrey Berger, Rose Ann Bodman, Dennis Bozzay, Mike Brady, Jackie Chain, Jack Cowan, Mike Grant, Frank Holmes, Dan Kassebaum, Sherry McCowan, Keith McMullen, Jeannie Moe, Kraig Paradise, Mark Peters, Margie Richardson, Margy Terpstra, Mike Thelen, Josh Uffman, Jane Walker, Linda Yust, Jim Ziebol. An asterisk means "documented." For abbreviations, see p. 9.

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Call the 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 Sherry McCowan, 314-664-2381 and press "3" or wait for the prompt. You can also leave a message at the end of the Nature Line recording ☞

Nature Notes Deadlines & Mailings

We meet at the Oak Bend Library, 842 S. Holmes, Kirkwood to attach mailing labels. We could use your help! Call Margie Richardson 314-965-8974.

<i>mailing party</i>	Oak Bend Library	<i>NN deadline</i>
Mon.	9/15, 10-1 PM	Fri. 9/5
Mon.	10/20, 10-1	Fri. 10/10
Mon.	11/17, 10-1	Fri. 11/7
Mon.	12/15, 10-1	Fri. 12/5

Community Colleges Offer Nature Classes

Register with the Continued Education Dept. of the campus offering the class. Sending your name, address, SSN, phone, course number, course title, and fee. You may also register by phone or by visiting WWW.STLCC.EDU

Florissant Valley CC

3400 Pershall Rd, St. Louis MO 63136-1499
314-595-4444

Meramec CC

11333 Big Bend Blvd., St. Louis MO 63122-5799
314-984-7777

Missouri River/ Columbia Bottoms Hike

BIOL: 701 585 Florissant V
Saturday, 9-11 AM 9/20 fee \$6

Mississippi R/St. Stanislaus CA Hike

BIOL: 701 586 Florissant V
Saturday, 9-11 AM 10/4 fee \$6

Mississippi R Bluff Nature Reserve

BIOL: 704 585 Florissant V
Saturday, 8-10 AM 10/18 fee \$6

Fall Wildflowers

BIOL: 704 600 Meramec, CN 230
Thursday 7-9:30 PM 9/18 fee \$30
Field trips 9/20 & 10/4
Sponsored by Mo. Native Plant Society

Fall Migrant Birds

BIOL: 709 600 Meramec, CS 104
Thursday 7-9 PM 10/16 & 10/23 fee \$42
Field trip 10/25
Sponsored by St. L Audubon

Monarchs and other Fall Butterflies

BIOL: 715 600 Meramec, CN 233
Tuesday 6:30-9 PM 9/16 fee \$16.50
Field trip 9/20
Sponsored by NA Butterfly Assoc., St. L

Fall Reptiles

BIOL: 712 600 Meramec, CN 230
Wednesday 6:30-10 PM 9/3, 10, 17, & 24
fee \$70
Field trips 9/6 & 9/27
Sponsored by St. L Herpetological Society

Beyond Backyard Birding

BIOL: 722 600 Meramec, CN 233
Monday 7-9 PM 9/15 & 9/22 fee \$31
Field trip 9/27
Sponsored by Webster Groves Nature Study Society

Exploring the 2003 Fall Night Sky

BIOL: 726 600 Meramec, SS 112

Wednesday 7-9 PM 9/10 & 9/17 fee \$27

Field trip 9/12

Sponsored by St. L Astronomical Society

Birding on Borrowed Time

Continued from page one

those new birds for herself and the other tour participants.

All through the book she gives deserved credit to the fine leaders and others who helped her attain her phenomenal record. Of particular interest to St. Louis birders are the paragraphs about WGNSS members and our Thursday outings. "Without the inspiration, fun, excitement, and learning on those many memorable Thursdays I certainly never could have or would have achieved what I have," Doesn't that make you feel appreciated, you Thursday birders? Phoebe gives special and well-earned credit to WGNSS-member Bertha Massie who at the time had the women's world record of over 3000 birds and to whom we Thursday birders owe many thanks. Pages 76-80 recount the excitement of Bill Rudden's discovery of a mysterious gull that appeared in our area, and of the many hours that she, Ron Goetz, and Bill spent searching for and finally relocating this elusive gull—a Slaty-backed Gull—the first record of this species for the lower 48 states. Phoebe says, "That winter event remains one of my all-time highlight experiences."

It's refreshing to know that one of her highlight experiences happened right here at home, because her memoir is actually one highlight experience after another, all over the world. There is no way to review experiences: they have to be read about in Phoebe's own words. She was a very gifted writer and you will relive every experience along with her—the birds and birding being only a part of the telling. There were many times that her life was in danger, but she and her companions continued birding—even owling during an earthquake in Costa Rica! Typical of Phoebe, she birded on her own during tour siesta times!

After several injuries and a broken wrist, plus the recurring cancer and operations, the

years finally told her to carry "geriatric" supplies along: knee brace, analgesics, folding cane and stool, painkillers. She showed down a bit, but of course the trips and additions to her birding list continued until her tragic death in 1999, a bus accident in Madagascar, after a very successful and exhilarating last birding trip. Her binoculars were in her hands.

Those of us who knew Phoebe from her and our early birding and learning years will remember her always as a fairly quiet but enthusiastic and very observant birding who was excited about every find and always ready to share her discoveries. She adopted fellow world-birder Peter Kaestner's philosophy: "Work like hell, and be helpful to people." She may have worded it differently, but her memoirs tell us that she not only lived this philosophy but on her way to becoming a birding legend, she also became a most extraordinarily accomplished and courageous woman.

Birding on Borrowed Time is not only about birds and travels, but is touched with humor, personal philosophy and reflections, great warmth, and many, many surprises. It's a must read! ♡

Key to WGNSS Calendar

birding field trip

each Thurs. 8:00 AM—call Jackie Chain 314-664-5998

most Sat. 8 AM: 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 Sherry McCowan, 314-664-2381.

To submit a report to the *Nature Notes* bird column, call Jim Ziebol at 314-781-7372 or email Yvonne at 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

entomology meeting

last Sun: call Marshall Magner 314-961-4588

general meeting

7:00 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 1 at Eden Seminary in

Webster. Pat McCormick 636-225-0264

Big Day birding competition May

Nature Notes deadlines

10 days prior to 3rd Mon: call Anne

McCormack 314-965-8091

amccormack@stjosephacad.org

membership expires/renewal due

Aug. 31

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Contact the editor ☞

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 ☞

2002-03 WGNSS Board

President and Conservation Chair:

Yvonne Homeyer

1508 Oriole Ln.

St. Louis MO 63144

314-963-7750

homeyer@earthlink.net

1st Vice President & Interim Env. Ed Chair:

Mike Flieg

6803 Nashville

St. Louis MO 63139

314-645-3356

gmflieg@aol.com

2nd Vice Pres: Pat McCormick

1338 Eaglebrooke Ct.

Ballwin MO 63021

636-225-0264

Treasurer: Randy Korotev

800 Oakbrook Ln.

St. Louis MO 63132

314-993-0055

rlkorote@artsci.wustl.edu

Secretary: Jim Adams

35 Tulip Dr.

St. Louis, MO 6311-4660

314-961-2494

dadams5084@aol.com

Editor: Anne McCormack

587 Andrews

St. Louis MO 63122-5722

314-965-8091

amccormack@stjosephacad.org

Ornithology: David Becher

12829 Mariner's Pt Ct.

St. Louis MO 63141

314-576-1146

Co-chair Ornithology: Kent Lannert

1258 Ruppel Ln.

O'Fallon IL 62269-7167

618-624-4464

klannert@charter.net

Botany: Fr. James Sullivan

1607 Ville Maura Lane

Hazelwood MO 63042-1054

314-291-7885

Entomology: Marshall Magner

516 Bacon Ave

Webster Groves MO 63119

314-961-4588

Member at Large: Ann Earley

1425 Bobolink Place

St. Louis, MO 63144-1128

314-963-0103

aee623@prodigy.net

Member at Large: Tom Parmeter

2270 Love Ln.

Florissant MO 63031

314-921-6017

tksp@aol.com

Member at Large: Mike Thelen

943 Morehouse Ln.

St. Louis, MO 63130-2158

314-862-6642

Nature Notes is printed on recycled paper.

www.wgnss.org

Need directions?

Shaw Nature Reserves (Arboretum)

- 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—is the first beyond headquarters

Clarence Cannon NWR

- Annada, Mo., in Pike Co.
- From I-270, take I-70 west to MO-79, then go north 35 miles to Annada, MO.
- Just past the city limit sign, there will be the sign for the refuge. Turn right and follow the road all the way to the refuge parking lot, the usual meeting spot.

Des Peres Park

- on Ballas Road, one block north of Manchester Rd. in Des Peres.
- Turn right (east) at the Des Peres Park sign—park in the first lot on the right.

Horseshoe Lk State Park

- Take I-55/70 east to Hwy 111 exit.
- Turn left onto Hwy 111 and follow road to the entrance of the park on the left.
- Meet at the first parking lot to the right, just past the entrance.

Lake Carlyle

- 50 miles east from downtown St. Louis, approx. an hour drive
- Cross the River on I-55/I-64/I-70.
- After a mile, the interstates split; take I-64 east. Past O'Fallon IL, take exit #19 & exit north on US-50/ IL 158.
- Within 1/2 mile turn right on US-50 and continue through Lebanon for 24 miles to the stoplight at the junction of Hwy. US 50 and IL-127. Turn left
- Usual meeting spot is McDonald's restaurant

Little Creve Coeur Lake

- Take I-270 to Olive Blvd. Go west.
- West on Olive to north on Creve Coeur Mill Rd.
- Left (west) on St. L Co. Waterworks Rd.
- Go 0.4 mile to right (north) on River Valley.
- Enter Creve Coeur Athletic Complex on right drive around back.

Powder Valley Nature Center

- 11715 Cragwold Road in Kirkwood
- 270 south to Big Bend east, south (right) on Geyer, west (right) on Cragwold
- or south of 44, take 270 north to Watson (366) east, immediate left on Geyer, left on Cragwold
- or 44 to Lindbergh Blvd., south to Watson (366), west on Watson to north on Geyer, west (left) on Cragwold.
- approx. 1 mile to nature center, on right

Riverlands Environmental Dem. Area

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

St. Louis Co. Library Headquarters

- The membership meets on a variety of days, Sept–April, at 7:00 PM in auditorium.
 - Take 40 to Lindbergh south, left at the second light into library.
 - 1640 South Lindbergh in Frontenac. We usually meet in the auditorium.
 - All are welcome. Bring a friend!
- Birding trip, park on north side.

Tower Grove Park

- Take 44 to Kingshighway south, east (left) on Magnolia, 1st right into park.

Two Rivers (Mark Twain) NWR

- Take IL-100 west from Grafton to Brussels Ferry.
- 3.6 miles on Ill. River Rd., follow signs.

Webster Groves Nature Study Society

Call 314-935-8432 for a summary of the latest bird sightings in the St. Louis area. www.wgnss.org



Meetings

Wednesday September 3

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

Thursday September 18

7:00 PM General meeting. St. Louis Co. Library Headquarters, Lindbergh Blvd. Topic to be announced.

Tuesday October 7

7:00 PM St. L. Co. L-HQ

Thursday November 20

7:00 PM St. L. Co. L-HQ



Botany

Thursday August-December

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 September 28

7 PM at Magners', 516 Bacon Ave., Webster, 314-961-4588: Show and Tell. Members and friends bring items gathered during the summer to share with others. Projector and screen will be available.



Join WGNSS

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

Nature Notes

deadline September 5



Birding

Thursdays August-September

8:00 AM Des Peres Park on Ballas, one block n. of Manchester. Questions: call Jackie Chain, 314-644-5998.

Saturday August 23

8 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with David Becher, 314-576-1146.

Sunday August 24

8 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with Dave Rogles.

Saturday August 30

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 576-1146.

Sunday August 31

8 AM Tower Grove, meet at Bird Garden, NW corner of park, with Mike Brady.

Saturday September 6

8 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with David Becher, 314-576-1146.

Saturday September 6

7:30 AM SLAS at Tower Grove, with Torrey Berger and Mike Thelen.

Sunday September 7

8 AM Tower Grove, meet at Bird Garden, NW corner of park, with Sherry McCowan.

Saturday September 13

8 AM Tower Grove, meet at first picnic site past stables with David Becher.

Saturday September 13

8 AM SLAS at Busch CA with Torrey Berger and Mike Grant.

Sunday September 14

8 AM West Tyson C. Park, Epstein Prairie, with Mike Brady.

Saturday September 20

8 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with David Becher, 314-576-1146.

Sunday September 21

8 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with Dave Rogles.

Saturday September 27

8 AM Tower Grove, meet at first picnic site past stables with David Becher.

Saturday September 27

7:30 AM SLAS at Carlyle for "pelagic" trip. Reservations required: call Joe Eads, 314-966-3171.

Sunday September 28

9 AM Hawk Watch at Mark Peters, Imperial Mo. See p. 4 for directions.

Saturday October 4

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 576-1146.

Sunday October 5

7:30 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with Mike Thelen.

Saturday October 11

8 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with David Becher, 314-576-1146.

Saturday October 11

8 AM SLAS all day to 2 Rivers NWR with John Solodar and Paul Bauer.

Saturday October 18

8 AM Tower Grove, meet at first picnic site past stables with David Becher.

Saturday October 18

8 AM SLAS all day to Clarence Cannon NWR with Jim Malone and Torrey Berger.

Sunday October 19

8 AM Horseshoe Lake on 111 Ill., meet at pavilion at end of causeway, with Frank Holmes.

Saturday October 25

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 576-1146.

Saturday October 25

8 AM SLAS Little Creve Coeur with Mike Grant and Jim Malone.

Saturday November 1

8 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with David Becher, 314-576-1146.

Sunday November 2

7:30 AM Shaw Nature Reserve (Arboretum) Meet at visitor's center with Mike Thelen, small admission fee. Plan for 3.5 mi. hike. Bring lunch if you wish to continue to Robertsville SP in afternoon.

Saturday November 8

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 576-1146.

Saturday November 8

8 AM SLAS at Horseshoe Lake with Paul Bauer and Torrey Berger.

Saturday November 15

8 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with David Becher, 314-576-1146.

Saturday November 22

8 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with David Becher, 314-576-1146.

Saturday November 22

8 AM SLAS at Busch CA with Mike Thelen and Mike Grant.

Sunday November 16

8 AM Horseshoe Lake, meet at 1st parking lot on right with Kent Lannert.

Saturday November 29

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 576-1146.

Sunday December 7

8 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with Dave Rogles

Saturday December 13

8 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with David Becher, 314-576-1146.

Saturday December 13

8 AM Riverlands. Meet at Teal Pond, with Dave Rogles and Paul Bauer

Sunday December 14

8 AM Baldwin Lake boat launch parking lot with Kent Lannert.

Webster Groves ***☾

Nature Study Society

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Webster Groves Nature Study Society

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ e-mail _____ fax (____) _____

Call the Nature Line at **314-935-8432** for meetings and bird sightings. www.wgnss.org

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 Oak-
brook Ln., St. Louis MO 63132
Please make check payable to: Webster
Groves Nature Study Society

Webster Groves Nature Study Society