



CHICAGO AUDUBON SOCIETY
5801-C N. Pulaski Road Chicago, IL 60646-6057

Periodicals

COMPASS

Navigating the world of birds and nature

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JULY/AUGUST 2016

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act

*Over 100 Years of Effort
Saving Billions of Birds*

Although referred to as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918, this treaty, initiated for the protection of migratory birds, has beginnings that stretch back to 1900. It was further established and refined in 1916 as the Canadian Convention which was a treaty between the United States and Great Britain (acting on behalf of Canada). It is among the oldest wildlife protection laws on the books. Its creation was one of the National Audubon Society's first major victo-

turbines, high-tension power lines, communications towers, and the like—are (relatively) new. According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) estimates are that power lines kill up to 175 million birds a year. Communications towers kill 50 million, and uncovered oil waste pits account for up to another 500,000 to 1 million. Data on wind turbines are harder to come by, but current estimates hover at around 300,000 bird fatalities a year. USFWS wants to strengthen implementation of the law



American Kestrel. Photo by Jerry Goldner.

ries, and in the years since its enactment, the MBTA has saved millions, if not billions, of birds from harmful human activities. The statute makes it unlawful to pursue, hunt, take, import, export, transport, capture, kill, purchase, sell, barter, or offer for purchase, sale, or barter any migratory bird, or the parts, nests, or eggs of such a bird except under the terms of a valid permit issued pursuant to Federal regulations. Since its passage, the MBTA has expanded its geographic area (via treaties with Mexico, Japan, and Russia) and the scope of its coverage (adding eagles, corvids, and other birds). In 1962, it was updated to address how Native American Tribes can collect feathers from protected birds for religious ceremonies (a practice otherwise banned by the MBTA).

Although the MBTA tries to keep birds as safe as possible, many of the problems birds face today—wind

to cover these, and other hazards to birds. Currently, enforcement of the act is arbitrary and difficult, though companies whose activities pose threats to migratory birds should take action to reduce that risk. A number of companies in the oil and power-line sectors have already developed and implemented best practices to protect birds, some of which are simple and cheap. USFWS has been working with involved parties to determine the best ways to make the MBTA as strong as possible.

To view the list of protected birds, go to: www.fws.gov/birds/policies-and-regulations/laws-legislations/migratory-bird-treaty-act.php. To view the entire Migratory Bird Treaty Act, go to www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/migtrea.html.

Information courtesy of U.S. Fish & Wildlife and the National Audubon Society.

Chicago Audubon's First Annual Photo Contest Winners



1st Place *Palm Warbler* Steven Jner



2nd Place *Mourning Warbler* John Picken



3rd Place *Black-crowned Night Heron* Jennifer Marshall

Congratulations to the winners of Chicago Audubon's First Annual Photo Contest. We would like to thank all of you who entered for sharing your beautiful images with us. We also thank our judges for their valuable time and support. Thanks also to the Field Museum and Chicago Botanic Garden for donating prizes. We look forward to seeing even more entries for Chicago Audubon's Second Annual Photo Contest in 2017. Have a magical summer!

Birdathon 2016 Summary

... and a few thoughts

In the middle of May, winter is supposed to be a distant memory, and bird migration is supposed to be at its peak. That's why we always choose dates around then for the Chicago Audubon Annual Birdathon—a day when teams fan out and try to document as many bird species as they can.

This year, the designated weekend (May 14–15) was more like February than a normal May. Teams that went out on that Saturday were met by blustery north winds and February-style temperatures in the 30's. Sunday was a little better—still cold, but not quite as windy. Neither day was one you would have thought to be the middle of May.

Five teams participated this year. Two new teams came on board—Jill Norek and Jeff Smith did a traditional Big Day in Will County. Carl Giometti and Steve Huggins did the same in Cook County. The Steel Belted Kingfishers (Joe Lill and Wes Serafin) restricted their birding to the Palos/Orland Forest Preserve; Craig Stettner and two intrepid students from Harper College (The Toucan'ts) spent the day walking in the Spring Creek Valley Forest Preserve, while the Meandering



Caspian Tern. Photo by Jerry Goldner.

Mollymawks (Dave Willard, Bonnie Duman, Ben Marks, Tom Gnoske and Akiko Shinya, joined by other birders for the early morning) spent the day on foot at Skokie Lagoons Forest Preserve.

All told, despite the unfavorable conditions, we saw a lot of birds. The total for all groups combined was 179 species, which is only five off the record of 184 in 2005. Carl and Steve took the individual list honors with 143 species. Joe and Wes set a state record for an "Area Big Day" with their 127. Joan and Jeff found 108 species in Will County. Craig's crew took the honors for all day on foot, finding 94 species, while my Skokie group struggled to end up with 85.

Although there were no outlandish rarities reported, there were a lot of "good" birds. Carl and Steve found lingering Red-breasted Mergansers on Lake Michigan, a Least Bittern at Killdeer, Piping Plovers at Montrose, a total of 16 species of shorebird scattered through the county, Franklin's Gulls at two locations, White-eyed Vireo, Lapland Longspurs at

Orland Grasslands and a Worm-eating Warbler among 23 species of warblers. Joe and Wes discovered Trumpeter Swan, Eared Grebe, Merlin, more Lapland Longspurs, Hooded Warbler and Summer Tanager. Joan and Jeff's list added Bell's Vireo, Northern Mockingbird and Kentucky Warbler. The Spring Creek team reported the only Willow Flycatcher along with Hooded Warbler and

Summer Tanager and the Skokie Lagoons group added Prothonotary Warbler and Clay-colored Sparrow.

I'm always intrigued about what was missed as well as what was seen. Probably the most glaring miss was



Silver Spotted Skipper. Photo by Roger Shamley.

Lincoln's Sparrow. Most of the other possibilities are late May arrivals (like Connecticut Warbler, Nelson's Sparrow, Alder and Olive-sided Flycatchers), so maybe, given the weather, it is not so unreasonable that we didn't find any of them.

Next spring will be here before you know it. Think about putting a team together and joining the fun.

Good Birding!

Dave Willard
President
Chicago Audubon Society



Song Sparrow. Photo by Roger Shamley.



EAGLE OPTICS IS COMING!

October 1, 2016, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.,
North Park Village Nature Center; 5801 North Pulaski Road, Building D

This is our annual visit from the largest independent dealer of high quality binoculars, scopes, and all types of optical supplies. If you are thinking of making a purchase or just have questions, mark your calendars for October 1 because this is a great opportunity to talk to the experts—and possibly even make a purchase. (No purchase necessary to ask questions!) And for those of you who have never attended one of these events, please note that it is open to the public. Friends and family are welcome. If you have questions or need directions, call Chicago Audubon office at 773-539-6793.

Montrose Point Bird Walk: This is a special opportunity to begin October 1 on a positive note—plan on joining a bird walk field trip at Montrose Point (the Magic Hedge) from 7:00 to 9:30 a.m. Meet at the Magic Hedge. Group leader will be Chicago Audubon's Jeff Sanders. The Walk will finish in time to be off to the Nature Center at North Park Village for coffee, tea, and some bird talk. Then starting around 10:00 a.m. you can enjoy Eagle Optics Day right there at the Nature Center. If you have any questions about the Walk, contact Jeff at yellowstart5@yahoo.com.

Eagle Optics generously donates a percentage of all sales on Eagle Optics Day to Chicago Audubon.

COMPASS

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5801-C North Pulaski Road
Chicago, Illinois 60646-6057
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773-539-6793



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Report injured birds to Chicago Bird Collision Monitors: 773-988-1867

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#birdthepreserves continues ...

Here is what's coming up (more to be scheduled). Go to our website for more details (chicagoaudubon.org) and for any possible changes in dates or times. More upcoming walks and events are on Page 4.

JULY 19 (TUESDAY, 7:00 A.M.): SKOKIE LAGOONS BIRD WALK, WINNETKA. The Walk will last about two hours, but because this walk is on a weekday, join us for as long as you can and leave early if you need to get to work. Meet at the Forest Preserve parking lot north of Willow Road, just east of the Edens Expressway in Winnetka. Keep checking this website (chicagoaudubon.org) for confirmation in case we need to change either the starting time or the location. Walk leader and contact: Dave Willard, dwillard@fieldmuseum.org or 312-665-7731.



Monarch Butterfly. Photo by Roger Shamley.



Green Darner. Photo by Roger Shamley.

AUGUST 14 (SUNDAY, 8:00 A.M.): TRAILSIDE MUSEUM, RIVER FOREST. Learn to identify birds by their behavior, field marks, and habitat on this guided walk. Bring your binoculars or borrow a pair of ours. For adults and children 10 years old and up. The Museum is located at 738 Thatcher Ave in River Forest; the Museum phone is 708-366-6530. Walk leader and contact: John Elliott, johnelliott4@gmail.com; 708-567-4363.



Great Horned Owl chicks. Photo by Joy Schmoll.

AUGUST 16 (TUESDAY, 7:00 A.M.): SKOKIE LAGOONS BIRD WALK, WINNETKA. The Walk will last about two hours, but because this walk is on a weekday, join us for as long as you can and leave early if you need to get to work. Meet at the Forest Preserve parking lot north of Willow Road, just east of the Edens Expressway in Winnetka. Keep checking our website (chicagoaudubon.org) for confirmation in case we need to change either the starting time or the location. Walk leader and contact: Dave Willard at dwillard@fieldmuseum.org or 312-665-7731.

IN THE FALL (More to be Scheduled)

SEPTEMBER 27 (TUESDAY, 8:00 A.M.): BIG BEND BIRD WALK, LAKE FOREST PRESERVE, DES PLAINES. We'll be searching for late migrant warblers, flycatchers, sparrows, early waterfowl, and year round resident birds. Wear hiking boots (trails can be wet) and bring binoculars. The first half of the trip will be around the lake and Des Plaines Rivers. For the second half we'll be walking in the woods and on the bicycle path. Meet at the picnic shelter on the right/north, after you enter the preserve. Entrance is on East River Road, between Golf Road and Ballard Road in Des Plaines. Walk leader and contact is Alan Anderson. Maximum is 15 participants. Please register with Alan at casresearch@comcast.net.

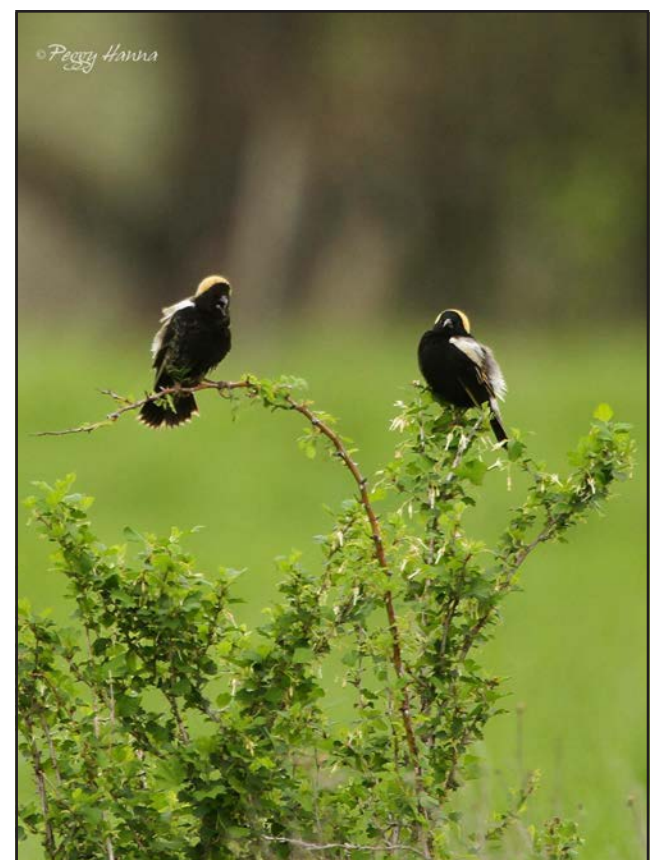
SEPTEMBER 29 (THURSDAY, 7:30 A.M.): BUSSE WOODS FOREST PRESERVE BIRD WALK (SURROUNDED BY SCHAUMBURG/ ELK GROVE VILLAGE/ ARLINGTON HEIGHTS). We'll be searching for late migrant warblers, flycatchers, sparrows, early waterfowl, and year round resident birds. Wear hiking boots (we'll be walking on paved and unpaved paths), bring binoculars. The walk will last about 2 hours. Meet in the parking lot of the Boathouse at the far end of the Busse Woods Boating Center entrance. The entrance is just west of the new bridge over Higgins Road, and just east of I-290/ IL 53. Walk leader and contact is Alan Anderson. Maximum is 15 participants. Please register with Alan at casresearch@comcast.net.



Bobolink. Photo by Peggy Hanna.

The Bobolink

Bobolinks are birds of tall grasslands, uncut pastures, overgrown fields, meadows, and the continent's remaining prairies. No other North American bird has a white back and black underpart—sometimes described as resembling a tuxedo worn backwards. The male also sports a straw-colored patch on his head and his amazing song carries widely over the open land. Then, at end of summer, he molts back into a buff and brown plumage which nicely matches that of his mate. Every year the Bobolink migrates an impressive 12,500 mile round trip from southern South America. In migration, this species orients itself with the earth's magnetic field. It is able to do this because of the iron oxide in the bristles of its nasal cavity and in the tissues around the olfactory bulb and nerve. They also use the starry night sky to guide their travels. We are very grateful they are so well equipped to make this incredible journey so that we will have the privilege of seeing them in the summertime!



Bobolinks. Photo by Peggy Hanna.

SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER (EVERY SATURDAY, 8:00 A.M.): CHICAGO AUDUBON BIRD WALKS. North Park Village Nature Center, 5801 North Pulaski Road, Building D. Come join us for migration time to see many birds and walk through the beautiful autumn woods surrounding the Nature Center. All levels of birders are encouraged to attend. The Walk leaders always welcome questions. For information or if you need directions, call the Chicago Audubon office at 773-539-6793. You do not need to be a member of Chicago Audubon to join us. Everyone is welcome. Bring family and friends!

OCTOBER 1 (SATURDAY, 10:00 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.): EAGLE OPTICS DAY. This is our annual visit from the largest independent dealer of high quality binoculars, scopes, and all types of optical equipment. A variety of equipment will be on display and experts will be available all day to answer questions and give guidance. This event is open to the public and a portion of all sales is donated to Chicago Audubon. Bring family and friends!

OCTOBER 1 (SATURDAY, 7:00 A.M.): EARLY MORNING BIRD WALK AT MONTROSE POINT. This Walk will take place on Eagle Optics Day (described above) at the incredible Magic Hedge on the

lakefront at Montrose Point. Be sure to dress for the early morning chill. Meet at Montrose Point at 7:00 a.m. to view many migratory birds; then leave Montrose around 9:30 for North Park Village Nature Center to warm up with hot coffee, tea, and some bird talk. Then starting around 10:00 a.m. you can enjoy Eagle Optics Day right there in the Nature Center. If you have questions about the Walk, please contact the leader, Jeff, at yellowstart5@yahoo.com.

EVERY SATURDAY ALL YEAR (8:00 A.M.): BIRD WALKS, WOODED ISLAND, JACKSON PARK. These wonderful walks continue throughout the year, weather permitting. Bring binoculars, field guides, and dress for the weather. Many species are seen. Meet at Clarence Darrow Bridge, just south of Museum of Science and Industry. For details and directions, contact Pat Durkin at pat.durkin@comcast.net. Everyone is welcome!

Coming up in the next issue ... details about our **Annual Seed Sale**. Don't miss good seed for reasonable prices — good for you and good for the birds!!

WORKDAYS SKOKIE LAGOONS EVERY SECOND SATURDAY ALL YEAR (10:00 A.M.). These workdays are sponsored by Chicago Audubon. Activities include buckthorn cutting, brush pile burning and other management endeavors. Meet at the Tower Road parking lot, east of the lagoon bridge, Winnetka. For further information, please call Dave Kosnik at 847-456-6368. Everyone is welcome!

Reminder to our Readers receiving printed copy of our newsletter:

The Compass can be read and enjoyed in color on chicagoaudubon.org. Just click on the word "Newsletters" in the top row of tabs on the home page to visit our archives. Don't miss these wonderful birds in living color!



Bright lights from buildings, along with reflective or transparent window and lobby glass, are hazards for birds migrating through Chicago.

Each year Chicago Bird Collision Monitors recover more than 5000 birds that have suffered collisions in the downtown area.

With your participation our rescue and prevention efforts can be expanded and more birds can be saved.

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- Monitor a building** where you live or work.
- Transport birds** to wildlife rehabilitation centers.
- Support **collision prevention** work.
- Assist in **public outreach** and awareness programs.

For more information:
www.birdmonitors.net
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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO OUR READERS

There has been some confusion about the difference between a National Audubon membership and a Chicago Chapter membership. A National membership by itself does not financially support the Chicago Audubon Chapter. National Audubon and the Chicago Chapter (and all other chapters) have entirely separate budgets (except for a small yearly stipend from National). In other words, the Chicago Chapter has always carried the burden of all costs of producing and mailing this newsletter and other types of mailings that we have been sending to both the Chapter members and the National members in this area. Because

of this separation in budgets and because we need local support, we are asking that you consider becoming a Chapter member at this time. Chapter membership will not only help with our immediate need to reduce costs related to the newsletter, it will give direct financial assistance to our local programs and goals and enrich the energy and support of the Chapter membership base. If you would like to become a Chicago Audubon Chapter member or renew your existing membership, please fill out the form to the right and send it to our office, or you may join online at our website (chicagoaudubon.org).

Chicago Audubon Society does not rent, lease, trade, or otherwise disclose any membership information whatsoever.

Chicago Audubon Membership Form

If you wish to become a new member or to renew an existing membership, you may either mail in this form with a check or your credit card information or charge your membership online (chicagoaudubon.org). You may also make a straight donation with this form or online. If you prefer, you may call the office with your credit card information (773-539-6793).

Your name

Street address

City

State

Zip code

Phone number

Email

Minimum yearly membership: \$25. At \$65 or above, new Membership or Membership renewal includes an official Chicago Audubon hat.

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