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COMPASS

Navigating the world of birds and nature

Visit our Website Chicagoaudubon.org



**CHICAGO AUDUBON
SOCIETY**

5801-C N. Pulaski Road | Chicago, IL 60646-6057

Letter from the President

Dear CAS members,

Chicago Audubon Society is committed to building a strong constituency for bird conservation.

First, we welcome and value all the new members who joined during our membership drive. We hope that through our community, you will find ways to use your own talents, interests and networks to make a difference for birds.

Another key to growing our capacity is to expand our reach and visibility. This is where additional donations from our supporters make an enormous difference.

Here is the story of three of them:

Jerry Goldner, former board member and frequent poster in our Facebook group, used a Facebook fundraiser to make his gift to CAS.

Dori Levine sold plover T-shirts and donated the proceeds to CAS.

Pamela Vawter lived in New Jersey when she became interested in birds and conservation. Along with her husband, she would travel the East Coast appreciating the natural world and the birds that made it their home. Pamela eventually retired to Lake County, Illinois, and could not ignore the changes she saw in her own backyard, coinciding with development in her area. She was particularly frustrated and emboldened by the political influence of business interests in Washington.

Pamela wanted her legacy to set an example for others to never stop fighting for our planet and the life that thrives here. Through a significant and meaningful bequest, Pamela gifted

migratory birds, and wildlife in Chicago, a fighting chance. Chicago Audubon Society's work was strengthened by her generosity. Her gift inspired us to make a strategic plan and hire a full-time Program and Communications Manager in order to expand our programming into new communities and make some new friends for birds.

Memberships and donations strengthen our efforts to protect local birds and habitat. In this issue you'll read about many ways that we are doing just that. We're very grateful that you are with us on the journey!

Good birding! — Judy Pollock



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Cover, Short-eared Owl by Jerry Goldner

Black-capped Chickadee by Lisa Musgrave

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Plum Creek Forest preserve Oct 26 work day — a great success

Chicago Audubon, with the Forest Preserves and several other bird groups, organized a volunteer event to remove Autumn Olive from grassland bird habitat at Plum Creek Forest Preserve. See article in [Sept – Oct Compass](#).

Top photo, right: Jim Herkert exec director of Illinois Audubon Society explained to the volunteer stewards at October 26 work day Organized by CAS and other bird groups that Plum Creek Forest Preserve is extremely important grassland bird habitat.

Bottom photo, right: Bridget Kiernan and Frances Kane organizers of the Feminist Bird Club had a lot of fun while they removed invasive Autumn Olive from the Plum Creek Forest Preserve grassland.





Northern Saw-whet Owl by Jerry Goldner

Disappearing birds

by Judy Pollock, CAS President

“Three Billion North American Birds have vanished since 1970.” You probably saw the headlines. We’re taking a look at what they mean for the Chicago area. Below are some excerpts from the study, *Decline of the North American Avifauna* — and our comments.

Reference: <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/DECLINE-OF-NORTH-AMERICAN-AVIFAUNA-SCIENCE-2019.pdf>

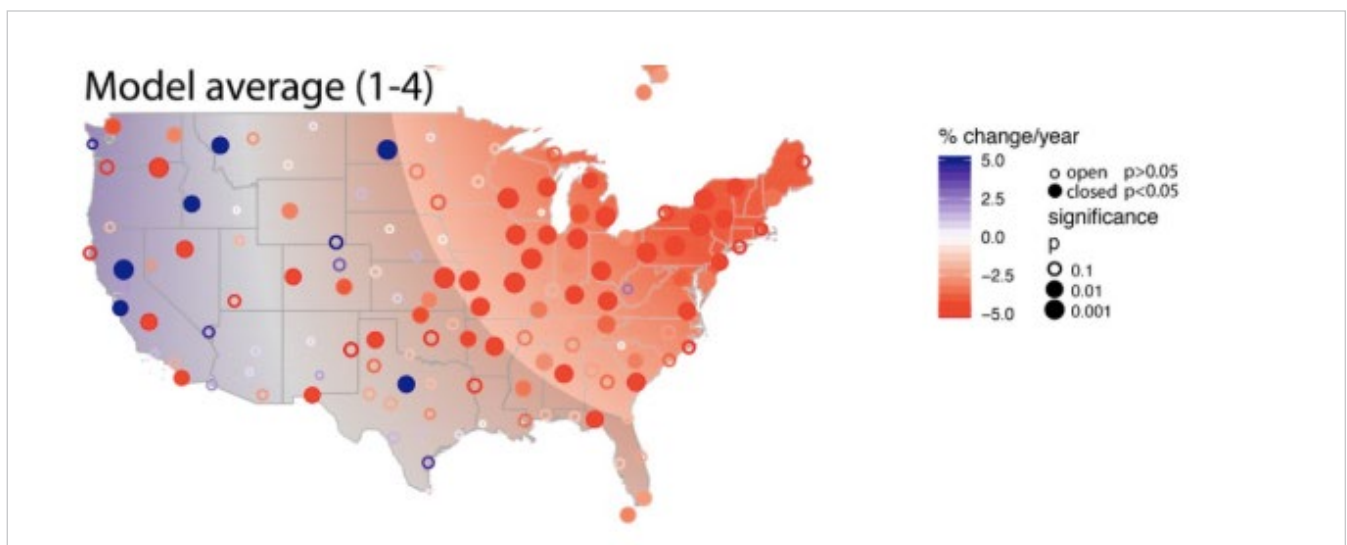
Authors: “Across breeding biomes, grassland birds showed the largest magnitude of total population loss since 1970 — more than 700 million breeding individuals across 31 species — and the largest proportional loss (53%); 74% of grassland species are declining... driven by habitat loss and more toxic pesticide use in both breeding and wintering areas”

Comments: Grassland birds find excellent habitat in our county forest preserves. In the past 20 years, bird

conservationists have identified them as species of highest concern in our region and landowners have responded by improving conditions. The BCN Survey shows that their populations are holding fairly steady since the late 90’s — see <http://bcnbirds.org/trends13/trends.html> CAS’ workdays at Plum Creek and Camp Pine benefit grassland birds.

Authors: “A total of 419 native migratory species experienced a net loss of 2.5 billion individuals, whereas 100 native resident species showed a small net increase (26 million).”

Comments: Migratory land birds face many challenges here. Habitat loss, windows and cats lead the list. Local birders note declines anecdotally, and the study suggests that birds migrating through here are declining at about 2.9% annually. Bird Friendly Chicago, the Chicago Bird Collision Monitors, and advocacy for urban bird habitat and threat reduction are ways that CAS helps.



Authors: “Population declines can be reversed”

Comments: Don’t we know it! We have the wonderful story of the Piping Plovers, but also we’ve seen increases in many of the same families that the study highlights: ospreys, pelicans, cranes, vultures, gnatcatchers, most waterfowl, and hawks.

Authors: “Our results signal an urgent need to address the ongoing threats of habitat loss, agricultural intensification, coastal disturbance, and direct anthropogenic mortality, all exacerbated by climate change, to avert continued biodiversity loss and potential collapse of the continental avifauna.”

Comments: Another recently released study, this one by National Audubon Society (NAS), expands on this. NAS has

declared “a bird emergency.” In Survival by Degrees NAS has projected that 389 bird species are seriously threatened by climate change and related impacts such as drought, sea level and lake level changes, and extreme weather especially in spring. Link to report. At the press conference announcing this report, Chicago Congressman Mike Quigley appealed to conservation minded individuals and organizations to take action because the federal government is not poised to do the right thing at this time.

The local bird conservation community is talented, and responding. Your CAS membership makes a statement that you care about birds. Throughout this newsletter and our website are more ways that you can make a difference

Bird Family (Species that nest or migrate in Chicago Area)	Number of regularly-occurring species in Chicago area/in study area (US. and Canada)	Percent decrease 1970-2017	% Species in the family in decline
Shrikes (Loggerhead and Northern)	2/2	69%	100%
Larks (Horned)	1/1	67%	100%
Swifts (Chimney)	1/4	65%	100%
Nightjars (Common Night-hawk, Whip-poor-will, Chuck-wills-widow)	3/5	55%	60%
Quail (Bobwhite)	1/5	52%	80%
Terns, Gulls	15/22	51%	73%
Kingfishers (Belted)	1/1	49%	100%
Cuckoos (Black-billed, Yellow-billed)	2/4	48%	75%
Blackbirds (orioles, meadowlarks, Bobolink, blackbirds, cowbird, grackle)	11/18	44%	83%
Plovers (plovers, Killdeer)	6/8	39%	88%
Sandpipers (sandpipers, dowitchers, yellowlegs, snipe, woodcock, godwits, Whimbrel, turnstones, knots, Sanderling, phalaropes, Willet, Dunlin)	27/32	38%	72%
Sparrows	23/38	38%	87%
Warblers (warblers, redstart, yellowthroat, parula, ovenbird, waterthrushes)	37/44	38%	64%

Net change in abundance across native North American bird families; selected families that are common in the Chicago Region 1970-2017 (adapted from a chart in the study). Disturbing losses among the bird families above put us all on notice.

McKinley Park Update

by Mara Flores and Benjamin Weiss

The monthly bird walks at McKinley Park's Sunday Farmers' Market have ended for the season after 6 successful outings. Participants from the surrounding area included a Boy Scout who successfully completed his Bird Study Merit Badge by identifying and describing the 15 remaining species needed to obtain 25 species total, a jogger who noticed our binoculars while running by, a father and son originally from France, a family of five with three young kids eagerly identifying species from our guidebooks, and many more. We even ran into a couple birding on their own after having attended one of the previous walks.

Bird species that made appearances were just as diverse as our participants. Regular sightings around the lagoon included Great-blue Herons, a Caspian Tern, Chimney Swifts, Black-crowned Night-Herons, Barn and Tree Swallows, Canada Goose, Mallards. The restored areas around the lagoon were filled with American Goldfinch, Cedar Waxwings, Gray Catbirds, and Warbling Vireos. We were surprised on our visit in September by a Cape May Warbler.

Humans and birds are connected from long ago. Their stories are as diverse as ours: their food, the landscapes they have seen, the friends they have met, the troubles, the losses. We have many things to share with each other. We just need to listen!

Urban Treaty Partnership Grant Awarded

CAS is honored to be taking the lead in an Urban Treaty Partnership grant over the next year and a half. Partners include Chicago Park District, Cook County Forest Preserves, Chicago Ornithological Society, Openlands, Illinois Young Birders, and Friends of the Forest Preserves.

We will build new partnerships in the McKinley Park and Riverdale/Pullman neighborhoods and ultimately increase the diversity of field trip leaders in Chicago. Objectives include training new field trip co-leaders, working with new partners, engaging new people in birding, restoring riparian woodland, prairie, and savanna habitat and addressing windows that are dangerous to birds. Project activities will begin next spring.



McKinley Park



White-breasted Nuthatch by Lisa Musgrave



Harrier Wings by Jerry Goldner



Chicago Bird Collision Monitors (CBCM) says — “Build Smart from the Start!”

by Annette Prince CAS Board Secretary and CBCM Director

The momentum for bird-friendly building standards is growing and Chicago bird lovers are eagerly awaiting review of the bird-friendly design ordinance sponsored and introduced by Alderman Brian Hopkins - now with co sponsors: Aldermen James Cappleman, Daniel La Spata, Harry Osterman, Brendan Reilly, Michele Smith, Gilbert Villegas and Scott Waguespack. If one of these is your alderman, please write to thank them, and Mayor Lightfoot, for supporting bird-friendly building measures that will protect tens of thousands of the migrating birds that pass through Chicago every year.

Learn how you can support Chicago’s Bird-friendly Design Ordinance at birdfriendlychicago.org.

The goal is to have new construction projects “build smart from the start” — using designs that minimize hazards for birds. Incorporating bird-friendly features and materials into an initial plan is far less expensive than the cost of trying to retrofit a completed building that proves to be deadly for birds. Keeping bird safety measures in mind from the start will allow protective measures to be integrated into the aesthetics and functioning of an attractive and sustainable building.

CBCM can assist anyone wanting to make new or existing buildings safer for birds with consultations and educational presentations. We can help problem-solve areas of your home or workplace that pose dangers to birds. We can provide an AIA approved continuing education class to your firm if you have architects looking to learn more about the requirements and methods of bird-friendly design.



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.

YOU CAN HELP:

- Join a **morning rescue team**.
- 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

773-988-1867

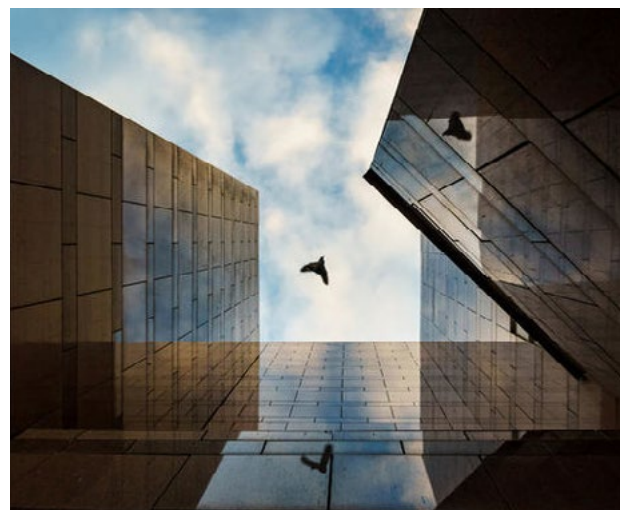


Photo: Bird Friendly Chicago



Blackpoll Warbler by Michael Ferguson



American Avocets at Montrose by Krzysztof Kurylowicz

CAS Advocacy Task Force

by *Tamima Itani and Leslie Shad*

In late September the CAS Advocacy Task Force held a well-attended kickoff meeting to define and prioritize the areas for engagement by the Society, as well as tap into the energy and passion of members to affect and influence change in Chicago and Cook County to benefit birds.

Three major areas emerged for CAS direct support:

- Bird Friendly Chicago Buildings Ordinance
- Advocacy for Natural Areas in the CAS geographical scope (all of Chicago and much of Cook County). This includes developing an overarching advocacy plan that can be used in specific situations, such as Jackson Park, the South Shore Nature Center, the Montrose Dunes and the River Parkland
- Campaigning for the use of sustainable, bird-friendly products, such as shade-grown coffee and paper products sourced from alternate sources to fresh cut trees.

In addition to CAS's direct leadership and involvement in the above-mentioned topics, CAS will provide strong support to partners who take the lead on the following broader issues:

- Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- Cook County Forest Preserves Referendum
- State issues such as those driven by the Illinois Environmental Council
- Federal building collision legislation

Finally, we agreed to quickly share information about National Audubon key campaigns, including the following topics:

- Endangered Species Act
- Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
- Climate change

If you are interested in joining one or more of our campaign teams, please contact us at cas@chicagoaudubon.org.



Save the Date!

CAS Birding America Symposium

March 14, 2020

John Fitzpatrick, Director of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and former Chicagoan, has been confirmed as the keynote speaker at the next Birding America symposium. Fitzpatrick's talk is titled *'Birds Can Save the World – But Only if We Invest in them Today.'*

Birding America is an all-day conference held at North Park University that features fascinating talks on local, national and international birding travel as well as birding and conservation topics. Expand your horizons and meet like-minded bird lovers at this fun event!

Visit our website at chicagoaudubon.org for updates and registration. Volunteers are needed to help organize this major undertaking. If you are interested in helping, please call our office at 773-539-6793 for a menu of possible volunteer opportunities.



Plover Heroes

by Judy Cheske

The Montrose Beach Piping Plovers volunteers were honored with the Community Group VIP Award by Friends of the Parks “for their significant contributions to the open spaces of Montrose Beach and the surrounding community.” Nearly 200 volunteers watched over the nest, parents and three chicks every day, from sunrise to sunset, for 12 weeks. Shana Conner, Amy Lardner and Judy Cheske accepted the award

on behalf of the group. The ceremony was held during Friends of the Parks’ 3rd annual “Parks as Democracy?” Conference. This award highlights the contributions of the birding community, inspiring other volunteers (such as park stewards) to call for stronger partnerships within the conservation community.

Cook County Forest Preserves Referendum

Sadly, President Toni Preckwinkle and others on the Cook County Board have decided that “Now is not the time” for a referendum to be put on the ballot to let voters decide whether there should be a small property tax increase to help the Forest Preserves achieve their mission. It is not an exaggeration to say that this is the most important current local habitat issue.

“I really believe the Forest Preserve is in a very difficult spot,” said Commissioner Larry Suffredin, a Democrat from Evanston. “I appreciate the president and respect her judgment on this, but we’ve got to continue to make the case for why the Forest Preserves need additional revenue.”

CAS will keep you posted on this very important issue.

Be Bird Friendly — Simple Actions You Can Take to Help Birds

Much of the coffee sold in our stores is grown in full sun, but delicious coffee can be grown under a canopy that provides excellent bird habitat. This helps birds in Mexico, Central and South America and the Caribbean, where many of our migrating birds spend the winter.

But how do you know which coffee is really bird friendly? The Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center certifies coffee that provides the best bird habitat. Yes, you can trust that ‘Bird Friendly’ seal. Some locally available brands include The G.O.A.T. Coffee Catalyst Blend (a local business), at Valli Produce; Café Fair, at Mariano’s or Target; and Allegro Coffee Organic Early Bird, at Whole Foods.

See Chicago Audubon’s shade-grown coffee list at chicagoaudubon.org.



Horner Park Yr1



Horner Spring Yr3

Calendar of Events — Walks, Workdays, Programs

Unless otherwise noted, our activities are free and open to the public. You do not need to be a Chicago Audubon Society member to participate. For updates or more information, visit chicagoaudubon.org or call the CAS office, 773-539-6793.

Bird Walks

Wooded Island Bird Walks, Jackson Park —

Saturday, November 2 - 8:00 a.m. Every Saturday, all year.

These wonderful walks continue throughout the year, weather permitting. Bring binoculars and field guides and dress for the weather. Meet at the east side of the Clarence Darrow Bridge, just south of the Museum of Science and Industry. For more information contact Pat Durkin, pat.durkin@comcast.net

Brezina Woods Bird Walk —

Wednesday, November 27 - 8 a.m.

Join Doug Stotz for the last Brezina Woods walk of the year. Park at the easternmost end of the parking area, east side of Mannheim Rd. between Cermak and 31st St. in Westchester. Entrance is just south of the bridge over Salt Creek. Leader: Doug Stotz, dfstotz@gmail.com

Dawn Owl Walk at Thatcher Woods —

Sunday, December 15 - 5:30 a.m.

Listen for resident great horned and screech owl calls as part of the 120th annual Christmas Bird Count. For adults and children ages 10 and up. Meet at Trailside Museum, 834 Thatcher, River Forest; parking lot on Chicago Ave. just west of Thatcher. Call Trailside, 708-366-6530, for required registration. Maximum 10. Leader: John Elliott, johnelliott4@gmail.com

Programs and Workdays

Camp Pine Woods Workday —

Camp Pine Woods Forest Preserve
Central Road Glenview, IL (map)
Saturday, November 2 - 9:00 a.m.

Focus: Brush cutting and burning. Waterproof shoes/boots are recommended, as well as work gloves and protective eyewear. Gloves and eyewear will be provided for those who need them. While mosquito and tick season is winding down, insect repellent is recommended.

Meet at the farthest parking lot at Camp Pine Woods on Euclid/Lake Avenue between Des Plaines and Glenview, just east of the Des Plaines River. Enter on the south side of Lake Avenue, eastbound ONLY from Des Plaines River Rd. (there's no left turn westbound on Lake). For questions contact: Alex Landberg, al.landberg@gmail.com

Restoring River Riparian Connectivity and Habitat: Fixing Chicago's Last Dam Problem —

North Park Village Nature Center
5801 N. Pulaski Rd.
Tuesday, November 12 - 7:00 p.m.

Dr. Lauren Umek, Project Manager with Chicago Park District's Department of Cultural and Natural Resources, will tell us about removal of the North Branch dam at River Park. Built in 1910, the dam was eliminated in July 2018 in an effort to open up 20 miles of the river for fish and

provide new recreational and education opportunities. She will describe how 3 different municipalities, each serving a different geographic region, with different missions and funding sources, worked together to restore this critical piece of local ecology and how it fits into a larger conservation context. Lauren oversaw the removal of the North Branch dam.

Socializing and refreshments at 7:00 p.m. Program begins at 7:15 p.m. Everyone welcome.

For questions or directions, call Chicago Audubon's office at 773-539-6793.

Camp Pine Woods Workday —

Saturday, December 7 - 9:00 a.m.
(See above)

120th Christmas Bird Count

Counts sponsored and supported by National Audubon Society are held between Dec. 14 and Jan. 5 each year. Chicago Audubon sponsors or supports the counts below. Contact the designated person for more information about how to participate in a specific count.

Sunday Dec. 15, Chicago Urban Count – Jeffrey Sanders, yellowstart5@yahoo.com

Monday Dec. 16, Barrington – Duane Heaton, dheaton19@comcast.net

Saturday Dec. 28, Cal City/Sand Ridge – John Elliott, johnelliott4@gmail.com

A map of all count circles with contact information is at <https://audubon.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=fadfb421e95f4949bde20c29a38228bd>

Be an ambassador for Birds — No Experience Required

by John Elliott, CAS Board member

You watch birds. You enjoy birds. Maybe you know a special place for birds. It might be a forest preserve trail, a local park, or even your neighborhood streets. Why not share your love and commitment by introducing others to these special places?

Recent announcements so very much in the news confirm what most of us already know: birds are in serious decline across North America. Many of us volunteer for habitat restoration, speak up for laws and regulations that protect birds and other wildlife, or even transform our own backyards into bird friendly habitat — but we need more hands and we need more voices.

How can we get more people involved in our work? By helping them get to know the local wonders of birds and nature.

Small songbirds like warblers are among the most affected by disastrous decline. Urban and suburban green spaces offer some of the most valuable refuges. You can help spread the word by leading walks in those spaces. You may think of your favorite birding spot as ordinary, but every space that is home to a resident or refuge for a migrant matters. The more of us who know and treasure those spaces, the more voices will have in our chorus.

Chicago Audubon is here to help you get started. You don't need to be an identification expert. You don't need to be an ecologist or biologist, or own fancy equipment. You just need curiosity and a desire to share with others. Contact us at cas@chicagoaudubon.org for more information.

Yes, you can share your love for a special place, whatever your

“birding skill” level. Be an ambassador. Be a leader. Passion is contagious. Share.

P.S. Chicago Audubon is always looking for ideas for public programs. Are you especially curious about a particular topic about birds and nature? Do you know someone that deserves an audience? Contact John Elliott, program and field trip chair, with your ideas. johnelliott4@gmail.com



American Tree Sparrow by Lisa Musgrave

Chicago Audubon Membership Form

If you wish to become a new member or renew an existing membership, you may:

- 1) Mail in this form with a check or credit card information, or
- 2) Charge your membership online (at chicagoaudubon.org), or
- 3) Call the office with your credit card information at 773-539-6793.

Below is a summary of CAS membership levels and associated benefits:

Level	Price	Family Included*	CAS Hat	Recognition in Compass**	Free admission to CAS annual major event***	Exclusive Benefactor field trip
Student (25 and younger)	\$10					
Individual	\$25					
Family	\$40	•				
Supporter	\$75	•	•			
Steward	\$100	•	•	•		
Sponsor	\$500	•	•	•	•	
Benefactor	\$1,000+	•	•	•	•	•

* Family is defined as immediate family residing at member's address

** With member's permission

*** Birding America or Awards Banquet depending on timing of new membership / renewal

Your name _____

Street Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone number _____

Email (required to receive *Compass* newsletter) _____

Check (payable to Chicago Audubon Society) Visa MasterCard Discover

Exact name on card _____

Card number _____ Exp. date _____

Mail your completed form with check or credit card information to:

Chicago Audubon Society • 5801-C North Pulaski Rd. • Chicago, IL 60646

