



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

Periodicals

COMPASS

Navigating the world of birds and nature

VOLUME 30, ISSUE 3

MAY/JUNE 2016

Chicago Audubon's #birdthepreserves Continues Help us Celebrate the Big Year

As you may have read in our last issue and on our website (chicagoaudubon.org), this year Chicago Audubon has accepted a challenge from the Forest Preserves of Cook County to explore the rich bird life of the forest preserves and to engage some new birders while we're doing it. #birdthepreserves is an initiative that will connect new and diverse communities to the preserves by expanding birding programs and partnerships.

The forest preserves are rich in bird life, and we want to make 2016 the year we trek through lots and lots of grasslands, wetlands, shrublands, savannas and woodlands ... and see lots and lots of birds! We are especially excited about the Big Year competition, which runs from March 1 through December 31, 2016. There are two competitions:

- Which preserve has the most bird species? (Judged by the number of bird species accepted by eBird for the site hotspot.)
- Which preserve team engages the most new birders in their Big Year efforts? (Judged by field trip attendance sheets.)

Chicago Audubon's official team will be led by our president, Dave Willard and will bird the Skokie Lagoons, famed for its spring warblers and migrating waterfowl. We are also sponsoring other walks: Salt Creek (spring migrants, woodlands), Spring Creek (grasslands), Paul Douglas (grasslands, migrating waterfowl and herons),



Meadowlark at Lake Michigan. Photo by Jerry Goldner.

Miller Meadow (spring migrants, grasslands), Big Bend (sparrows, late migrants, waterfowl, early warblers, year round residents), Busse Woods (sparrows, late migrants, waterfowl, early warblers), along with not one but two woodcock walks, which have already taken place and both were great successes. You'll find the full list of Walks and more details on our website (chicagoaudubon.org).

Here's how you can participate:

- Bird at our team site, the Skokie Lagoons, (or at one of our sister sites, Salt Creek, Spring Creek or Paul Douglas and more--all are listed below) and enter your sightings into the eBird hotspot (not an

eBird "personal location"). If you haven't used eBird, it's easy to join at www.ebird.org;

- Come on out to our field trips and bring your friends! We want to introduce new people to Chicago Audubon and to birding. We're going to some fantastic places with some excellent guides. The Forest Preserves' new bird checklist will be available on all trips, and there are small prizes for new birders who reach the milestones of 25, 50 and 75 birds;
- Send ideas for groups of potential new birders that we might want to reach out to: jpbobolink@gmail.com;

- When you post on social media about Cook County forest preserve birds, use the hashtag #birdthepreserves;
- Check out the many activities at fpdcc.com/birding. You can join our Big Year team or sign up for training. You'll find more field trips, a Big Sit on May 7, a series of Bird Conservation Success Story walks, and more.

The following is a list of bird walks. Please be sure to look at our website (chicagoaudubon.org) for more details and also for any changes in dates and times.

April 22 EARTH DAY (Friday, 7:00 a.m.): Spring Creek Bird Walk, South Barrington. Meet at Penny Road Pond parking lot on Penny Road, about one mile west of Old Sutton Road. We will look for migrants in the lakes and wet areas between Penny and Higgins Roads. May be muddy. Walk Leader and contact: Craig Stettner, cstettne@harpercollege.edu; 847-925-6214.

April 30 (Saturday, 8:00 a.m.): Salt Creek Bird Walk, Western Springs. Look for spring migrants in this newly restored woodland. Meet at the Bemis Woods parking lot on the west side of Wolf Road, south of 31st Street and north of Ogden in Western Springs. Walk leader and contact: Doug Stotz, dstotz@fieldmuseum.org.

Walks continue on Page 3 ...

We had Record Breaking Attendance at Birding America XI on March 19 at North Park University



Birding America XI. Sam Burckhardt of the Chicago Ornithological Society presenting "Birding Eastern Michigan; Kirtland's Warbler nesting areas." Photo by John Elliott.

Chicago Audubon wishes to thank the incredible selection of speakers from all over the country who shared their knowledge, enthusiasm, and love for the world of birds, birding, bird song, birds of the region, birds of the world, gardening for birds, and the restoration and preservation of the environment.

And we wish to thank everyone who attended the symposium and everyone who worked so hard to make it such a great success. We could not have done it without you!

We hope to see all of you again in two years for Birding America XII.



Birding America XI. Mary Lou Mellon, Past President, Bird Conservation Network, presenting "Birding the Seychelles Islands, a Tropical Paradise in the Indian Ocean." Photo by Annette Prince.

Birdathon! 2016

Saturday, May 14 through Sunday, May 15

The word *Birdathon* combines the words birdwatching and marathon to describe a friendly sport which originated in England years ago. For the past seventeen years, the Chicago Audubon Society has held the Annual Dr. William S. Beecher *Birdathon!* Cup Challenge as one of our fundraising events.



Cooper's Hawk. Photo by Bill Costello.

Dr. Beecher was Director Emeritus of the Chicago Academy of Sciences and one of the pioneering birders of the Chicago area. Some years ago, he honored Chicago Audubon by consenting to allow us to use his name for our annual fundraising event. The Cup challenge involves teams of people competing to see how many different species of birds they can identify within a specified time limit.

Here is how this works: *Birdathon* teams comb Cook, Lake, McHenry, DuPage, Kane or Will counties on a specified date. This year those dates are Saturday, May 14 or Sunday, May 15 (or both if you have the energy). The teams identify as many species as they can within one day within the county of their choosing. The team that identifies the most species in the designated time period will have its name added to the Beecher Cup which is on display in the Bird Division at The Field Museum. Last year, six teams identified 172 species, with the winning team finding 156. Anyone interested in participating on either day, whether part of a team or individually, should contact Dave Willard as soon as possible (dwillard@fieldmuseum.org). New birders are encouraged to participate—this is much more about fun than competition!

There are a number of ways to donate or pledge. You may donate a flat amount (as many have done in the past), or you may pledge an amount per total species identified by your favorite team, or you can pledge an amount based on the total species count of all teams. If you wish to donate or pledge by credit card, please go to our website (chicagoaudubon.org), or you can call our office to use your

card over the phone (733-539-6793). The form on this page can also be used to make a donation by sending it to our office with a check or with your credit card information. All donations and pledges are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. All funds raised through *Birdathon* go toward Chicago Audubon programs.

More than ever before, your support is essential and greatly appreciated!

Five Competition Categories:

Open: The traditional Big Day challenge, with the slight variation that a team limits itself to one of the following counties: Cook, Lake, DuPage, McHenry, Kane, Will, and Kendall; all species identified anytime between midnight May 14 and midnight on May 15, or midnight May 15 to midnight May 16, using any type of transportation.

Site/Area Big Day: A team chooses one site (a city park, a forest preserve, etc.) and then birds the heck out of it! This is the perfect choice for a team that can only bird for a few hours.

Muscle-powered (on foot): Once the clock starts, all species must be identified without using any other mode of transportation.

Muscle-powered (bicycle): Once the clock starts, all species must be identified without using any motorized form of transportation.

Backyard sightings: Any species seen or heard in or from the backyard, from midnight May 14 to midnight May 15, or midnight May 15 to midnight May 16.

Good Birding!

Dave Willard
Birdathon Coordinator, Chicago Audubon Society
dwillard@fieldmuseum.org

Birdathon! 2016 Pledge Form

My tax-deductible donation of \$ _____ is enclosed.

OR

I am happy to pledge \$ _____ per species.

Your name _____

Street address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone number _____ Email _____

Make check payable to **Chicago Audubon Society**.

OR pay with credit card:

Visa MasterCard Discover

Name on card _____

Card number _____ Expiration date _____

You may also charge a donation or pledge online by visiting the *Birdathon* link on our website, www.chicagoaudubon.org, or you may call our office at 773-539-6793 to make a charge on the phone.

Mail your completed form to:

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



Cooper's Hawk. Photo by Jerry Goldner.



Cooper's Hawk. Photo by Jerry Goldner.

Among the bird world's most skillful fliers, Cooper's Hawks are common woodland hawks that tear through cluttered tree canopies in high speed pursuit of other birds. You're most likely to see one prowling above a forest edge or field using just a few stiff wingbeats followed by a glide. (Courtesy allaboutbirds.org)



Cooper's Hawk. Photo by Jerry Goldner.



Cooper's Hawk. Photo by Bill Costello.

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Report sightings to: 773-539-6793

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

Website: www.chicagoaudubon.org

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Office hours: Monday–Thursday
10:00 a.m.–4:15 p.m.
Closed Fridays and holidays

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#birdthepreserves walks continued

May 3 (Tuesday, 8:00 a.m.): Big Bend Bird Walk, Lake Forest Preserve, Des Plaines. 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. We'll be searching for sparrows, late migrant waterfowl, early warblers 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 River, and the second half we'll be walking in the woods and on the bicycle path. Walk leader and contact is Alan Anderson. Maximum is 15 participants. Please register with Alan at casresearch@comcast.net.

May 5 (Thursday, 7:30 a.m.): Busse Woods South Bird Walk, Arlington Heights. We'll be searching for sparrows, late migrant waterfowl, and early warblers. 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: Alan Anderson. Maximum is 15 participants. Please register with Alan at casresearch@comcast.net.

May 6 (Friday, 7:30 a.m.): Big Year Birding with the Paul Douglas Birdocrats, Hoffman Estates. Enjoy waterfowl, herons, and grassland birds as we explore this large preserve. These workday morning trips are structured so that you can leave after an hour if you like, or stay for two. Meet at the Paul Douglas parking lot, Central west of Ela, Hoffman Estates. Walk leader and contact: Judy Pollock, jpboblink@gmail.com.

May 11 (Wednesday, 7:00 a.m.): Salt Creek Bird Walk, Western Springs. Look for spring migrants in this newly restored woodland. Meet at the Bemis Woods parking lot on the west side of Wolf Road, south of 31st Street and north of Ogden in Western Spring. Walk leader and contact: Doug Stotz, dstotz@fieldmuseum.org.

May 13 (Friday, 6:30 a.m.): Spring Creek Bird Walk, South Barrington. Meet at Penny Road Pond parking lot, which is on Penny Road about one mile west of Old Sutton Road. We will be following the route of the Chicago Audubon *Birdathon! 2014* championship almost exactly two years after that great triumph. May

be muddy, wear long pants. Walk Leader and contact: Craig Stettner, cstettne@harpercollege.edu; 847-925-6214.

May 14 (ALL DAY SATURDAY STARTING AT 6:00 A.M.): Skokie Lagoons Bird Walk, Winnetka. Please join us for whatever part of the day is possible for you. This walk is part of Chicago Audubon's *Birdathon! 2016* annual two-day bird count. On this day, join us when you can, leave when you must. Meet at the Skokie Lagoons Forest Preserve parking lot north of Willow Road, just east of the Edens Expressway. Check our website (chicagoaudubon.org) to confirm if changes have become necessary. Walk leader and contact: Dave Willard, dwillard@fieldmuseum.org; 312-665-7731.

May 19 (Thursday, 7:30 a.m.): Big Year Birding with the Paul Douglas Birdocrats, Hoffman Estates. Enjoy waterfowl, herons, and grassland birds



Whooping Crane with Sandhill Cranes. Photo by Joy Schmoll.

as we explore this large preserve. These workday morning trips are structured so that you can leave after an hour if you like, or stay for two. Meet at the Paul Douglas parking lot, Central west of Ela, Hoffman Estates. Walk leader and contact: Judy Pollock, jpboblink@gmail.com.

May 22 (Sunday, 8:00 a.m.): Bird Conservation Network's Beginning Birder Walk, Skokie Lagoons, Winnetka. Bring binoculars if you have them; some will be available to borrow. Walk will end at 9:30 a.m. Meet at the Erickson Woods parking lot off Willow Road, just east of the Edens Expressway at the south end of Skokie Lagoons. Although there is no maximum number for the walk, please RSVP to the Walk Leader, Mary Lou Mellon, at marylou.mellon@gmail.com.



Cooper's Hawk. Photo by Bill Costello.



Common Redpoll. Photo by Roger Shanley.

Binoculars are definitely needed. Please advise at time of registration if you need a loaner pair. Thank you.

June 11 (Saturday, 6:30 a.m.): Spring Creek Bird Walk, South Barrington. Meet at Penny Road Pond parking lot, which is on Penny Road about one mile west of Old Sutton Road. Beginning with the osprey nesting at Penny Road Pond, we will see what birds appear to be using the

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, 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.

Please note: Further information about #birdthepreserves and the complete list of walks are also published on our website (chicagoaudubon.org).



Cooper's Hawk. Photo by Bill Costello.

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

MARCH through DECEMBER, #birdthepreserves. See Pages 1 and 3 for details.

May 14 and 15 (ALL DAY SATURDAY AND SUNDAY): Birdathon! 2016. This is an annual fundraiser for Chicago Audubon involving Birdathon teams which will comb Cook, Lake, McHenry, DuPage, or Will counties to identify as many different species of birds as they can within a specified time limit. See Page 2 for details.

April and May, (Every Saturday, 8:00 a.m.): Chicago Audubon Bird Walks at 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 spring 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!

June 4 (Saturday, 1:00 p.m.): Trailside Museum, Thatcher Woods, River Forest. Backyard Birds, a program to be presented by Chicago Audubon Board Member, Bobbi Asher. Trailside Museum at Chicago Ave and Thatcher Ave, River Forest. For directions, please call the Trailside Museum at 708-366-6530.

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. More details in future issues. This event is open to the public. 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; 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. 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!

Every SECOND Saturday All Year (10:00 a.m.): Skokie Lagoons Workdays. 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. 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.

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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.

Visa MasterCard Discover

Exact name on card

Card number

Expiration date

Mail your completed form with check or credit card information to:
 Chicago Audubon Society • 5801-C North Pulaski Rd • Chicago, IL 60646