



COMPASS

Navigating the world of birds and nature

VOLUME 25, ISSUE 3

MAY/JUNE 2011

Birdathon! 2011 *The 12th Annual Dr. William S. Beecher Cup Challenge* *Saturday, May 21*

IMPORTANT NOTE TO OUR READERS

Due to serious budgetary concerns, we will not be making a separate mailing of Birdathon pledge materials to everyone this year. We are asking that you please use the form at the bottom of this page to send in your pledge or your straight donation. And there are two other ways to make a donation: You may call our office to charge a pledge or donation on the phone at (773) 539-6793, or you may use our website (www.chicagoaudubon.org) and follow the Birdathon link on the home page.

For the past eleven years, the Chicago Audubon Society has held the Annual Dr. William S. Beecher Birdathon Cup Challenge as one of our major fund-raising events. 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 the Chicago Audubon by consenting to allow us to use his name for our annual fund-raising event. Indeed this was a great honor! (The word *Birdathon* combines the words *birdwatching* and *marathon* to describe a friendly sport which originated in England years ago. It involves teams of people competing to see how many different species of birds they can identify within a specified time limit.)



White-throated Sparrow

Photo Kelly Colganazar

Here is how this works: Birdathon teams will be combing the Cook County area on May 21st identifying as many species as they can within that day. If you are a member of a group of birders who would like to compete in this event, we encourage you to contact us immediately. In addition to experienced teams, new birders are encouraged to participate. If you are a "lone birder" or just not very experienced at this time, we will help

you find a team that is suitable. Prospective competitive teams and interested individuals with some birding experience, please contact Joe Lill at (773) 631-3154.

The team that totals the most species identified in the designated time period will gain possession, for one year, of the coveted Beecher Cup, which is currently in the possession of the 2010 champions, the "Field's

Flickers" team (John Bates, Nick Block, Jason Weckstein & Ben Winger), which found 157 species!

All funds raised through Birdathon pledges go toward our programs. In the present economic climate it has become more important than ever that each local Audubon chapter, such as Chicago Audubon, raise more of their operating expenses on their own. Our efforts in education,

preservation, restoration and advocacy continue to be well received, and we look forward to continuing our goal of more awareness of the natural environment that surrounds us all.

As you can see on the form, you have a number of pledging options—you may pledge a flat amount (as many have done in the past), or pledge an amount per total species identified by your favorite team, or pledge an amount based on the total species count of all teams, which last year was 177. Please contact Joe Lill at trptjoe@aol.com with any questions and start forming your teams! Again, our office phone is (773) 539-6793 if you wish to pledge on the phone. The form below can also be used to make a credit card donation. All pledges are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. More than ever before, your pledge is essential and greatly appreciated!

Good birding!
Joe Lill
Chicago Audubon
Birdathon Coordinator

Birdathon! 2011 Pledge Form

My gift of \$ _____ is enclosed.
OR: I am happy to pledge \$ _____ per species.
OR: Team I am sponsoring (optional): _____

Make check payable to: Chicago Audubon Society
Mail check to: 5801-C N. Pulaski Road
Chicago, IL 60646

Name

Street Address

City, state, zip

Phone(s)

OR: You may use your credit card:
MasterCard Visa Discover

Print name exactly as on card

Card Number

Exp Date

If you prefer, you can call our office to use your card: (773) 539-6793.
You can also go online to the Birdathon link on our homepage:
www.chicagoaudubon.org

Thank you for participating in Birdathon! 2011!!

When Birds Collide with Your Windows

Every year people contact us about the highly energetic bird that keeps colliding with their windows. As you most likely know, birds do not perceive reflections the same way humans do. The bird that keeps throwing himself at your window perceives his reflection as another bird flying straight at him and during nesting season this "other bird" is particularly stressful to couples that are building their nests nearby. The parent birds believe the reflection is an intruder into their nesting territory and they are aggressively attempting to chase it away. The other possible cause of collisions is when a bird assumes that the background he sees reflected in a window is actually a continuation of trees, bushes and sky behind him and thinks it's safe to continue flying into the window—sometimes at high speed.

If you have ever had this happen to your home then you know that the bird will just keep colliding with your windows until he is exhausted which can lead to serious injury—or worse. Here are some suggestions to help obliterate or at least minimize your window reflections. Note that most of these *materials must be applied to the outside of the glass to be effective*. Unfortunately, just closing interior curtains or blinds can actually make the problem worse because it often intensifies outside reflections and the birds may end up seeing their reflections even more clearly than when the curtains or blinds are open.

Here are some suggestions:

CollidEscape makes windows visible to birds without obstructing your indoor view of the outdoors.



Cardinal arguing with an "intruder." Photo Annette Prince

A portion of each CollidEscape purchase is donated to Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP), a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the lives of migratory birds in urban areas. **Go to: lfdcollidescape.com**

CardinalAlert is a window decal designed to be placed along the bottom edge of problem windows, eliminating reflections from birds that mount their attack from a windowsill perch. **Go to: windowalert.com**

Screens or screening on the outside of the windows are very effective. The Bird Screen Company sells screens with suction-cup-mounting hardware that can be easily installed and removed. **Go to: birdscreen.com**

Arti Stick window color paints come in 18 colors and are marketed for children. Sheets of plastic can be peeled off the backing and applied to windows. **Go to: budgetartkids.com, or dickblick.com, or artsuppliesforartists.com.**

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Announcing ... CHICAGO AUDUBON SOCIETY'S ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS RECIPIENTS OF 2011

The Environmental Awards were presented at a banquet in April which will be featured in the next issue.

- 1) EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING:
CHICAGO WILDLIFE NEWS, CHICAGOWILDLIFENEWS.COM
- 2) PROTECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT – EDUCATOR:
CARL STRANG, NATURALIST WITH THE FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF DUPAGE COUNTY, WILDTHINGS -- WILDLIFE NEWS PROGRAM ON WDCB, NATURE INQUIRIES BLOG.
- 3) PROTECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT, SINGLE ACT, INDIVIDUAL – AVOCATION (3 RECIPIENTS):
I) **JUDITH LIHOTA, PRESIDENT, CALUMET ECOLOGICAL PARK ASSOCIATION.**
II) **ANNETTE PRINCE, CHICAGO BIRD COLLISION MONITORS.**
III) **JOE SUCHECKI, STEWARD AND BIRD MONITOR, SPRINGBROOK PRAIRIE.**
- 4) PROTECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT, SINGLE ACT, GROUP:
NO GAMES CHICAGO, TOM TRESSER.
- 5) PROTECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT, AVOCATION:
CONRAD FIALKOWSKI, CHICAGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, SAVE THE PRAIRIE SOCIETY, STEWARD (COOK COUNTY AND DUPAGE COUNTY), BIRD MONITOR.
- 6) PROTECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT, VOCATION (2 RECIPIENTS):
I) **GERALD ADELMANN, OPENLANDS, CANAL CORRIDOR ASSOCIATION.**
II) **DICK YOUNG, KANE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT (POSTHUMOUS RECOGNITION).**
- 7) SERVICE TO CHICAGO AREA BIRDERS:
PAUL AND JANICE SWEET, ILLINOIS BEACH HAWKWATCH.
- 8) CHICAGO AUDUBON GOOD BUSINESS NEIGHBOR:
DE LONG COMPANY INC, SUPPLIER OF HIGH-QUALITY BIRDSEED FOR CHICAGO AUDUBON'S ANNUAL BIRDSEED SALE.



Great Blue Heron.

Photo by Mike Baird



White Egret.

Photo by Carol Foil

COMPASS
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Report sightings to: (773) 539-6793

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

Activity line: (773) 539-6793, press 1

Website: www.chicagoaudubon.org

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Window films come in many colors and styles and can also be cut into strips or other shapes. These films are designed to look like frosted or etched glass. Be careful not to select shiny, reflective film because that would recreate the same problem. **Go to: windowdressingetc.com**

Gel Gloss, also called **Window Wax**, is a product that was once marketed for cleaning glass (then known as Glass Wax). Years ago it was a popular tradition to use stencils and Glass Wax to decorate windows at holidays. You can also create a freehand pattern. Remember that all stenciling or free-hand designs must come within three inches of each other to be truly effective. If too much space is left between designs, the birds will still be able to see too much of their reflection.

**For Window Wax, go to: vermontcountrystore.com or ikitchen.com.
For Gel Gloss, go to: amazon.com or drop by Home Depot.**

Use any kind of opaque tape to create patterns on the window. Again, keep the gaps to three inches or less.

Stretch lightweight netting or other material over the outside of the window. The netting must be several inches in front of the window and taut enough that birds can bounce off without hitting the glass.

This photograph is a clear demonstration of one of the ways to solve the problem.



Chicago Botanic Garden Regenstein Center. The long window on the left shows the clear reflection of sky and trees before the window was treated. This is very typical of the type of reflection that birds mistake for a continuation of the outdoors. The window on the right has the temporary circular shading solution. After both windows were fully treated, bird collisions declined dramatically and immediately. Photo Joan Vatz



Left to right: Jayne Colwill, Kim Ainis, Caroline Herzenberg, Pat Durkin, Jennie Strable, Rick Richter, Matthew Morrow, Jennette Rader, Sally Etz.

located at the south end of Wooded Island in Jackson Park. It has carried its name since the 1893 World Exposition and was part of the grand plan of Frederick Law Olmsted. A decent hybrid Tea Rose has not been found in the garden for many a decade.

What is found today is a densely planted area surrounded by a protective black

chain-link fence and tall snags and live trees. To quote Paul Clyne, "The Rose Garden has been the heart of the nature sanctuary status of Wooded Island." On March 9th a walk-through was held with Chicago Park District officials and Jackson Park Advisory Council members. Over a dozen birders also attended ... and after nearly two hours of sometimes heated debate, the decision was made that the fence will stay. Repairs to the fence were completed by March 31, 2011. [Excerpted from a report by Pat Durkin, Wooded Island Bird Walks, Chicago Audubon Society.]

New York Times Reporter Interviews Chicago Audubon President

With permission from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, Chicago Audubon Society organized a site walk March 15 on the land proposed for an outdoor regional police firing range. Chicago Audubon President Roger Shamley was interviewed by a New York Times reporter.

"A bird-call ringtone emanated from Roger Shamley's smart phone after a slog last week through a marsh on the Southeast Side where birdwatchers say many migratory birds nest." To read the full New York Times article, **Gun range near birds is opposed**, by Kari Lydersen, go to: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/25/us/25cncbirds.html?_r=1&sq=Chicago%20gun%20range&st=cse&scp=1&pagewanted=print

(See update on status of the firing range wildlife study below.)

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Conservation Report

Compiled by Carolyn A. Marsh

National: Collision Prevention Legislation

Washington, DC, April 18, 2011: American Bird Conservancy (ABC), the nation's leading bird conservation organization, today applauded legislation introduced by Illinois Congressman Mike Quigley (D-IL) that will prevent the deaths of millions of birds that collide with windows at thousands of federal buildings across the country. The bill, the Federal Bird-Safe Buildings Act of 2011 (HR 1643) calls for each public building constructed, acquired, or altered by the General Services Administration (GSA) to incorporate, to the maximum extent possible, bird-safe building materials and design features. The legislation would require GSA to take similar actions on existing buildings, where practicable. Importantly, the bill has been deemed cost-neutral by the Congressional Budget Office. "It is fitting that this legislation was introduced on the cusp of Migratory Bird Day. Once enacted, it will save the lives of millions of birds that collide with glass on buildings," said Dr. Christine Sheppard, ABC Bird Collisions Campaign Manager. "The way we live our lives cannot be detrimental to other species and this bill recognizes the importance of that mission," said Quigley. "This bill will not only save millions of birds' lives but it is also completely cost-neutral. I'm proud to continue what we started in Cook County and work with the American Bird Conservancy to do all we can to make sure birds continue to be a part of our world." Please contact U.S. Congressman Mike Quigley's office to thank him for sponsoring collision prevention legislation.

Washington, DC Office Phone: (202) 225-4061

Illinois District Office Phone: (773) 267-5926

State: House Bill 840 Legalizing Managed Cat Colonies Pulled

Donnie Dann and Bob Fisher, Bird Conservation Network, thanked everyone for sending letters and making calls to Illinois legislators that resulted in the demise of the proposed House Bill 840 to legalize managed cat colonies. The sponsor, Representative Holbrook, pulled the bill. The state departments of Natural Resources and Agriculture were especially helpful in explaining that this bill was bad for the cats as well as birds and other wildlife.

Local: Jackson Park's Wooded Island "Rose Garden" Fence Defenders

Plans were afoot by the Chicago Park District Department of Natural Resources to allow Jackson Park Advisory Council to remove the protective chain-link fence around the so-called "Rose Garden." The Rose Garden is

IMPORTANT UPDATE: Firing Range Wildlife Study Victory!!

Environmental activists opposing construction of a police firing range on the Southeast Side could get approval for a long-requested wildlife study at a Metropolitan Water Reclamation District meeting tomorrow.

The MWRD board will vote Thursday morning (April 21) on a motion to request a wildlife study by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources on a 140-acre area south of 134th, said commissioner Debra Shore. (Last year, the MWRD board gave preliminary approval to a proposal to lease a portion of the area to the City of Chicago for construction of an outdoor firing range for use by Chicago and area police officers.)

Local environmental groups have been arguing that the gun range would disturb migratory birds in wetlands on the MWRD land and north of it in Hegewisch Marsh, where the city planned a major nature center. The areas were designated as part of the Calumet Open Space Reserve several years ago by the city. The two ponds on the MWRD property also are designated as National Wetlands. The wildlife study would be "just a matter of due diligence on our part as the landowner," said Commissioner Shore. ...

"That's how species become endangered, because we're continually encroaching on their habitat," said Peggy Salazar, executive director of Southeastern Environmental Task Force (SETF). SETF maintains the firing range is inappropriate in the open space reserve, which the city has recognized as the most significant wetland and natural area in the city. MWRD still has to give final approval to the project after the city finalizes the plan and the City Council votes on it, Shore said.

The Chicago Audubon Society maintains that even without evidence of endangered species, construction and operation of a firing range would violate the Migratory Bird Treaty Act by harassing the egrets and blue herons.

The 9-0 vote in favor of a wildlife study is a true victory for the birds!

APRIL 21 UPDATE from newstips.org: The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) board voted 9-to-0 this morning to request a wildlife study for the area including the land proposed for a police firing range.

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Chicago Bird Collision Monitors

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

Last fall more than 1000 collision-injured birds were rescued – all from a relatively small area downtown. With your assistance, more birds can be saved.

YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Joining morning rescue teams
- Monitoring buildings where you live or work
- Transporting birds to wildlife rehabilitation centers
- Supporting collision prevention work
- Assisting in public outreach and awareness programs



Visit www.birdmonitors.net or call 773-988-1867

Calendar of Events

May/June 2011

Workdays Members Programs Birdwalks

Skokie Lagoons Workdays. 10:00 a.m. every second Saturday. These workdays are continuous throughout the year. The Chicago Audubon Society sponsors regular monthly workdays at Skokie Lagoons every second Saturday of the month. Activities include buck-thorn cutting, brush pile burning, and other management activities. Wear work clothes. 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!

Montrose Point Magic Hedge Stewardship Workdays to be held on the following Saturdays from 9 to noon: May 14, June 11, July 9, August 6, September 3, October 1, November 5. (Most dates are the usual 2nd Saturday of the month except where major events or holidays occur.) Volunteers are needed to help with weeding, mulching, planting native shrubs and trees. We are also establishing a prairie! Wear work clothes. For information about work dates, to sign up, and for directions, please contact David Painter: (773) 383-0721 or email at dvdpaint@yahoo.com. Everyone is welcome!



Cinnamon Teal. North Pond in Lincoln Park, April 17, 2011. Such sightings have been reported over the years but it is always a privilege to see this beautiful bird. Photo Michael LaBarbera.



*Downy Woodpecker
Photo by Lloyd Spitalnik*

Wooded Island Birdwalks. Jackson Park. Every Wednesday at 7:00 a.m. and every Saturday at 8:00 a.m. These wonderful walks continue throughout the year up to New Year's Day. 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!

Chicago Audubon Birdwalks. Every Saturday in April and May at 8:00 a.m. North Park Village Nature Center. 5801 North Pulaski Road, Building D. Our popular Spring birdwalks will continue through the first Saturdays of May to view the spring Migration. Learn about birds and their habitats while walking through the early springtime woods surrounding the Nature Center. These walks are led by expert birders who will welcome questions from all levels of birders. For information or directions to the Nature Center, call the Chicago Audubon office (773) 539-6793. Everyone is welcome!!

Birdwalk at Indian Boundary Park in Chicago. Sunday, May 1 from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at 2500 West Lunt Avenue. Meet out in front of the fieldhouse and bring your binoculars! This popular walk is led by Chicago Audubon Board member Joe Lill and is open to all ages and all levels of birders! Everyone is welcome!

Birdathon! 2011. Saturday, May 21. This year is the 12th anniversary of our annual Birdathon fundraiser. Everyone is welcome to join a team and count birds. This is one of our most important fundraisers for our projects and goals. Important details and pledge forms are on Page 1 of this issue and will also be published on our website (chicagoaudubon.org). If you wish to join up or have questions, please call Joe Lill at (773) 631-3154. You'll have lots of fun!

Did we mention?

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*White Egret carrying nest material.
Photo by Peter Marr.*

Report of Chicago Audubon Society Nominating Committee

The 2011 Nominating Committee of the Chicago Audubon Society nominates the following five candidates for three-year terms on the Chicago Audubon Society Board of Directors (terms expire March 2014): Alan Anderson, Alan Garrett, Ann Garrett, Carolyn Marsh, Jeffrey Sanders. There are six open positions that can be filled in this election. Further nominations of Directors may be made from among the membership by nominating petitions signed by not less than five members and accompanied by a written consent to serve executed by the proposed nominee. Petitions shall be filed at the office of the Society (5801-C North Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois 60646) either by personal delivery or certified mail not later than Saturday, July 16th, 2011. Certified letters postmarked by July 16th will be accepted.

The election of Directors will be held at the Annual Meeting to be held at the North Park Village Nature Center, 5801-D North Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois, on July 21st at 7:15 p.m. All current members of the Chicago Audubon Society (either through National Audubon or as a Chicago Chapter member) are eligible to vote in this election.

Chicago Audubon Society Nominating Committee:
*Michelle Devlin
Joe Lill
Roger Shamley*