



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

Periodicals

# COMPASS

*Navigating the world of birds and nature*

VOLUME 26, ISSUE 3

MAY/JUNE 2012

## Birdathon! 2012

*Saturday & Sunday, May 12 & 13*

PLEASE NOTE THAT BECAUSE OF THE NATO SUMMIT IN MAY, BIRDATHON! 2012 HAS BEEN MOVED TO MAY 12 & 13, WHICH IS A WEEK EARLIER THAN THE DATES PUBLISHED IN THE LAST ISSUE.

### IMPORTANT NOTE TO OUR READERS

This year, in an effort to “go greener,” we will not be making a separate mailing of Birdathon pledge materials to everyone. We are asking that you please use the form at the bottom of this page to send in your pledge or your straight donation. Also, please note there are two other ways to make a donation: You may call our office to charge a pledge or donation on the phone (773-539-6793), or you may use our website ([www.chicagoaudubon.org](http://www.chicagoaudubon.org)) and follow the Birdathon link on the home page. You may donate to this fundraiser at any time, even after the dates have passed.



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 fundraising 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 Chicago Audubon by consenting to allow us to use his name for our annual fundraising 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.



*Yellow-rumped Warbler. Wooded Island, Jackson Park. Photo by Jonathan Lavan.*

Here is how this works: Birdathon teams will be combing the Cook County area on May 12 and 13, identifying as many species as they can within those days. If you are a member of a group of birders who would like to compete on either day, 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 2011 champions, the “Field’s Flickers”

team (Nick Block, Josh Engel, Jason Weckstein & Ben Winger), which found 151 species!

All funds raised through Birdathon pledges go toward Chicago Audubon programs. In the present economic climate it has become more important than ever that each local Audubon chapter 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 creating 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 163. Please contact Joe Lill at [trptjoe@aol.com](mailto:trptjoe@aol.com) with any questions and start forming your teams! Again, our office phone is 733-539-6793, if you wish to pledge by credit card on the phone. The form below can also be used to make a credit card donation, or you can go to our website to make a donation ([chicagoaudubon.org](http://chicagoaudubon.org)). 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! 2012 Pledge Form

My tax-deductible gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

OR: I am happy to pledge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per species.

Team I am sponsoring (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

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

OR:  
Credit card: MasterCard Visa Discover

\_\_\_\_\_   
Card Number

\_\_\_\_\_   
Expiration Date

\_\_\_\_\_   
Print name as on card

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

You may also charge a donation or pledge online by visiting the Birdathon link on our website, [chicagoaudubon.org](http://chicagoaudubon.org), or you may call our office at 773-539-6793 to make a charge on the phone.

*Thank you for participating in  
Birdathon! 2012*

Chicago Audubon's Biennial

# Birding America IX

was a huge success!

Presentations at the all-day symposium on March 17 were well attended and covered a wide range of interesting and important subjects—from Chicago's Peregrine Falcon population to the birds of Costa Rica and Panama; from butterflies of the American Prairie to Pacific Pelagic Birding; from Operation Migration to birding the Indiana Dunes—and much more. The opening speaker, Dr. Erik Johnson of National Audubon, is Audubon's Gulf of Mexico and Mississippi Flyway conservation biologist. The closing speaker, Greg Miller, has birded all 50 states and much of Canada. He and two other birders broke the 700-species mark, and their competitive quests are documented in the book *The Big Year*, written by Pulitzer Prize winning author Mark Obmascik.

If you were unable to attend this year, we hope you will join us in 2014 for Birding America X—and bring friends and family!

(Top) Speaker Doug Taron (*Butterflies of the American Prairie*) and Chicago Audubon Board Member Julie Sacco. *Birding American IX*. Photo by Carol Ann Garrett.

(Second) Speaker Greg Miller and Chicago Audubon Board Members Alan & Carol Ann Garrett.

(Third) Speaker Dr. Agustin Zuniga (*Birds of Costa Rica and Panama*) and his son, Antonio. Photo by Carol Ann Garrett.

(Bottom) Speaker Joan Garland (*International Crane Foundation*). Photo by Carol Ann Garrett.



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

Website: www.chicagoaudubon.org

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Office hours: Monday–Thursday  
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Closed Fridays and holidays

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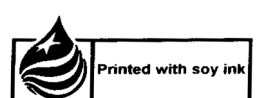
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Wind Turbine.  
Photo courtesy of National Audubon.

## Wind Turbine Guidelines Approved by Government Good for the Birds!

vital support to expand and create jobs, and wildlife gets the protection crucial for survival ... I'm proud of the pivotal role Audubon played in developing this strong, consensus-based approach. These guidelines are based on the best available science and provide a road-map to better bird protections across each of America's four great flyways."

"These guidelines set a new industry standard for bird protection," said Mike Daulton, Audubon's VP of Government Relations who served on the advisory committee ... "The guidelines steer wind turbines away from vital habitat, including Audubon's Important Bird Areas, and toward land already marked by development. They give the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service a place at the table for siting decisions; they help protect sites with high potential risk for birds; and they minimize habitat fragmentation. It's a real-world, collaborative approach, with real-world benefits for birds and their habitats across the country."

"We worked collaboratively for three years to hammer out science-based, practical guidelines. Now it is time to implement ... in the same collaborative spirit, and with the same nose for practical, science-based solutions to wildlife conflicts. We are very optimistic that this is a path toward better protection for birds and their habitats." The guidelines were developed with the assistance of a 22-member Wind Turbine Guidelines Advisory Committee which included experts from The National Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, Defenders of Wildlife, Massachusetts Audubon and Bat Conservation International.

The committee, created under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) in 2009, worked with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to recommend guidelines to avoid or minimize impacts to birds and their habitats by land-based wind energy facilities. The guidelines address habitat fragmentation, one of the biggest poten-

tial impacts of wind development on birds. As a result, wind developers who cooperate with the guidelines will be expected to avoid approaches that cut up and divide important habitats like forests and grasslands and make them less suitable for wildlife.

To see Audubon's policy on Wind Energy, go to [policy.audubon.org/wind-power-frequently-asked-questions](http://policy.audubon.org/wind-power-frequently-asked-questions). To download a copy of the final Guidelines, go to [fws.gov/windenergy](http://fws.gov/windenergy).



Wind Turbines.  
Photo courtesy of Iberdrola Renewables.

The Department of the Interior released guidelines designed to help wind energy project developers avoid and minimize impacts of land-based wind projects on wildlife and their habitats. The voluntary guidelines will help shape the smart siting, design and operation of the nation's growing wind energy economy.

"These first-ever federal guidelines are a game-changer and big win for both wildlife and clean energy," said David Yarnold, President & CEO of Audubon. "By collaborating with conservationists instead of slugging it out, the wind power industry gains

## First Sighting of a Bald Eagle Nest in Chicago Area for Over a Century!

Bald eagles have been migrating to the Chicago area in greater and greater numbers over the years. Some nests have been spotted in Cook County, but the Palos Township nest described below is thought to be the first nest within public view in more than a century.



Bald Eagle Couple. Photo by Jerry Goldner.



Bald Eagle parent feeding eaglets.  
Photo by Jerry Goldner.

A pair of American Bald Eagles have captured the attention of elated bird watchers and photographers. They were spotted nesting in a Cook County Forest Preserve in Palos Hills a month ago. Even more exciting is the fact that the nest that has been home to eggs, officials say, recently hatched ... the hatching of eaglets in Cook County hasn't been seen in over a century.

Steven Ambrose, who has been an avid bird watcher for the past six years, was the first to spot the eagles nest on March 17—by chance. "I was actually driving with my stepfather ... on a bird-watching trip ... and I just spied it out of the corner of my eye ... it looked like a large nest and the way the sun was hitting it, it looked like there was a white head that was coming out of it," said Ambrose.

Ambrose reported the sighting to the Illinois Ornithological Society and fellow nature enthusiast and photographer, Jerry Goldner. The two kept the nest a secret for nearly a month to prevent an influx of viewers from scaring the rare birds off. ... Goldner captured on camera what are believed to be the first images of the newly hatched eaglets being fed by one of the adult eagles.

"Very excited about that. We thought we saw the eaglets last week actually, but they were so small that it looked like a twig. But now today, we've got proof with video and photos of the mother or father feeding the eaglets, and it's just been very exciting," Goldner said.

It will be weeks before the fledgling eagles will be able to take to the air like their parents, but the rare glimpse



Bald Eagle approaching nest. Palos Hills, Illinois.

Photo by Jerry Goldner.

of them was enough for Goldner. "It's just a major deal for a wildlife photographer, a birder, anyone who loves nature to know that we have an environment that's healthy enough for them to raise their young, and the fact that everyone's showing respect and keeping their distance," Goldner said.

To ensure the safety of the endangered eagles nesting here, forest preserve police are monitoring the site. Viewing of the nest is restricted to 500 yards to prevent the public from disturbing the protected site. Goldner has some etiquette advice as well. "If you do come here and visit, we ask that you keep the volume down," he said. "We ask that you keep your distance. The

forest preserve police will make sure that happens, and it's just great fun for everyone." (Under federal law, interfering with the nesting of Bald Eagles is punishable by up to a year in prison and a \$100,000 fine (\$200,000 for organizations), or both, for a first offense. Penalties increase for additional violations, and a second such violation is a felony.)

Officials believe the eagles will remain in the nest through the summer season, and it is possible they will return each year!

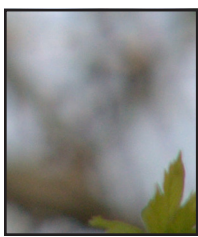
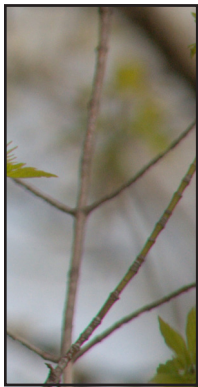
Main source: WTTW Chicago Tonight, "Eagles Nesting in Cook County," by Ash-har Quraishi.



Bald Eagle nest watchers. Palos Hills, Illinois. Photo by Jerry Goldner.



Yellow-rumped Warbler.  
Wooded Island, Jackson Park.  
Photo by Jonathan Lavan.



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 7000 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](http://www.birdmonitors.net)  
**773-988-1867**

**Reminder:** The Compass can be read and enjoyed in color on our website, [chicagoaudubon.org](http://chicagoaudubon.org). Just click on the word "Compass" in the top row of links on the homepage to visit our archives. Don't miss these wonderful birds in living color!



Great Blue Heron.  
Photo by Daniel Cardiff.

**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 Chicago 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 support 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, please fill out the form to the right and send it to our office at:

**Chicago Audubon Society**  
5801-C North Pulaski Rd  
Chicago, Illinois 60646

**Chicago Audubon Membership Form**

You may charge your membership online using our secure website, [chicagoaudubon.org](http://chicagoaudubon.org), or call the office at (773) 539-6793 and charge your membership over the phone, or mail in this form.

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Phone:**

**Email:**

**Minimum yearly membership: \$25**  
*New Members at \$65 or above receive a nice hat.*

We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover.

**Name on card:**

**Card number:**

**Expiration date:**

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

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**Calendar of Events**

**May/June 2012**

**Workdays, Birdwalks, Special Events**

**Chicago Audubon Birdwalks.**  
Every Saturday in April and May at 8:00 a.m. North Park Village Nature Center at 5801 North Pulaski Road, Building D. Our popular Spring birdwalks will continue through the first Saturdays of April and May to view the spring migration. Learn about birds and their habitats while walking through the beautiful woods surrounding the Nature Center. These walks are led by expert birders who welcome questions from all levels of birders. For information or directions to the Nature Center, call the Chicago Audubon office at (773) 539-6793. You do not need to be a Chicago Audubon member to join the walks. Everyone is welcome!!

**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 buckthorn 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!

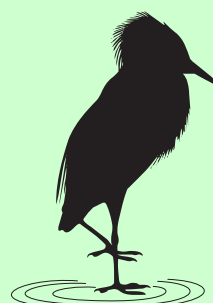
**Montrose Point Magic Hedge Stewardship Workdays will begin again in early Spring.** Volunteers will be needed to help with weeding, mulching, planting native shrubs and trees. We have also been establishing a prairie!

Wear work clothes. For information about work dates, to sign up, and for directions, please contact David Painter at (773) 383-0721 or email at [dvdpaint@yahoo.com](mailto:dvdpaint@yahoo.com). Everyone is welcome!

**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. 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](mailto:pat.durkin@comcast.net). Everyone is welcome!

**Birdathon! 2012 is Coming!!**  
**Saturday and Sunday: May 12th and 13th. (Dates have been changed because of the NATO Summit.)**  
The annual and most-fun bird count is coming up! If you are interested in joining a team, be sure to put one (or both) of the dates aside and come help us count the birds. This is an important fundraiser for Chicago Audubon, so even if you are unable to join a team, you may donate directly by giving a straight donation or a set amount per species for a particular team. See page 1 of this issue for full details and pledge/donation form. And remember, you can donate to this event, even after the dates have passed. For more information, contact our Birdathon leader, Joe Lill, at [trptjoe@aol.com](mailto:trptjoe@aol.com). Everyone is welcome!

**The Peace of Wild Things**



When despair for the world grows in me  
And I wake in the night at the least sound ...  
I go and lie down where the wood drake rests  
in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.  
I come into the peace of wild things ...  
I come into the presence of still water.  
And I feel above me the ... stars waiting with their light.  
For a time I rest in the grace of the world,  
and am free.

by Wendell Berry