



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

Periodicals

# COMPASS

*Navigating the world of birds and nature*

VOLUME 29, ISSUE 2


MARCH/APRIL 2015

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

CHICAGO AUDUBON'S  
BIENNIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS PROGRAM  
AND ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
WILL BOTH TAKE PLACE ON  
SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2015



*This year both the Awards Banquet and the Annual Membership Meeting will be held on the same evening and at the same location: The Silver Stallion Restaurant, 1275 Lee / Manheim Avenues (between Algonquin and Oakton) in Des Plaines.*

 In March 28, 2015, Chicago Audubon will hold its Biennial Environmental Awards Banquet to honor those who have made contributions to conservation, the protection of migratory birds and other wildlife, and have helped to conserve, preserve, and enhance the varied habitats and open spaces of the greater Chicago region. This year, the Awards Dinner will be followed by the Annual Members Meeting and the presentation of the evening's program, *A Birder's Trip to Cuba*.

- **The Banquet Dinner and Awards Program will begin at 6:00 p.m. (with a cash bar at 5:30 p.m.). The Awards will be presented around dessert time.**



*Neotropic Cormorant.*  
Photo by Hans Hillewaert.

- **The Annual Meeting will begin at approximately 7:30 p.m. following the Awards dinner. If you will be attending the Annual Meeting only, please plan to arrive a little before 7:30 p.m.**
- **If you wish, you may attend both the Awards Banquet and the Annual Meeting.**

The charge for the Banquet dinner will be \$33 per person. To make dinner reservations online, please go to our website, [chicagoaudubon.org](http://chicagoaudubon.org) and follow the links. If you prefer to send a check, please be sure to include your phone number, address, and dinner preference (chicken, salmon, or vegetarian). Mail your check along with that information to Chicago Audubon, 5801-C North Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois 60646. If you have questions, please contact Board Member Alan Anderson at [casresearch@comcast.net](mailto:casresearch@comcast.net), or call our office at 773-539-6793.

Again, if you wish to only attend the Membership meeting (which includes the program), please plan to arrive a little before 7:30 p.m., and please give us a call so we have an approximate count of the number of people to expect.

At the Annual Meeting, the Nominating Committee (Alan Anderson, Jeff Sanders, Bonnie Duman) will present the slate of names to be voted on by the Membership for election to the Chicago Audubon Board of Directors. Chicago Audubon is proud to have nominated the following individuals for election: Steve Bailey, Michelle Devlin, John Elliott, Judy Pollock, Julie Sacco, and Craig Stettner. Following the election and other Member business, the evening's Program, *A Birder's Trip to Cuba*, will be presented by Chicago Audubon Board Member, Bobbi Asher. This will be a multi-media presentation about Cuba, its enchanting scenery, rich culture, and friendly people—and one of the most important countries for neotropical migratory birds.

Recipients of the 2015 Environmental Awards are presented on Page 3. We look forward to seeing you on March 28!



*Cuban Tody.*  
Photo by Ian Merrill.



*Western Spindalis.*  
Photo by Mario Olteanu.



*Cuban Green Woodpecker.*  
Photo by David Ascanio.



*Cuban Trogon.*  
Photo by Pershin Oleg.



WE'VE PUBLISHED MOST OF THIS ARTICLE BEFORE, BUT IT BARES REPEATING!

Back by popular demand ...

## The Dark-eyed Junco

Our Elegant "Snow Bird" of Backyard Feeders

All year long—not just in winter—we receive calls from people wondering where their favorite birds have suddenly gone—or have not yet shown up at all in their backyards. "They're just not at the feeders and no where to be seen." These shifts in population are impossible to predict because many are caused by weather systems far away from our area. Others are caused by the appearance of a hawk near your backyard. The hawk may not stay around for long but just long enough to be sighted by the smaller birds, which causes them to move away to find safety and food somewhere else. Among the feeder favorites people ask about all the time, of course, is the Dark-eyed Junco.

Dark-eyed Juncos are easy to recognize by their crisp yet highly variable markings—the dark gray body, white underbelly, and those bright white tail feathers that constantly flash while in flight. They are also one of the most common birds in all of North America, ranging across the entire continent—from Alaska to Mexico, from California to New York. They flit about on the forest floors of the western mountains and Canada and then flood the rest of North America for the winter. A recent estimate put the total population of the Junco at approximately 630 million individuals.

Their favorites at feeders are millet, black oil sunflower, and safflower, plus peanuts and peanut butter suet cakes. In the wild they prefer the seeds of chickweed, buckwheat, lamb's quarters, and sorrel for about 75% of their year-round diet. During breeding season



Photo courtesy of visualphotos.com.



Photo by Vincent Mistretta.



Photo by Scott Alan McClurg.

they will also eat insects including beetles, moths, butterflies, caterpillars, ants, wasps, and flies for a necessary boost in their nutritional levels. They breed in coniferous or mixed-coniferous forests across Canada, the western U.S., and in the Appalachians. The Appalachian residents have shorter wings than the migrants that join them each winter. Of course, longer wings are better suited for flying long distances, a pattern difference commonly noted in other studies of the differences between migratory and resident species.

In the Spring, the female chooses the site for the nest which is typically in a depression or niche on sloping ground, or on a rock face, or amid the tangled

roots of an upturned tree. She uses her beak to weave together a foundation of grass, twigs, leaves and moss and then presses her body into the gathered materials to give the nest its shape. The nests are quite variable in design and placement. Sometimes ground nests are built with just a fine lining of grasses or pine needles. Others may be built with a foundation of twigs, leaves and moss and then lined with grass, ferns, rootlets, hair, and finer pieces of moss. It's a small structure, usually measuring three to five inches across and one and a half to less than three inches deep and usually takes three to seven days to build. It's very rare for Juncos to reuse a nest. When building around people, they may need to nest in or underneath buildings, window ledges, or in hanging flower pots or light fixtures.

Male Juncos, like many species, are very territorial in summer, chasing away intruders in rapid flights accompanied by excited alarm calls. During winter, they form large flocks and where the wintering ranges overlap, several subspecies may be seen in a single flock.

When a male courts a female he fans or flicks open his wings and tail, hops up and down, and picks up pieces of nesting material to show to her, most likely as a token of enticement. Interestingly, in spite of this material offering, females seem to prefer males that show more white in the tail—a fact of birth that all his courtship efforts can hardly overcome!



Photo by Richard Aaron.



Photo courtesy of etsy.com.

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773-539-6793



Editor: Skipper Joy Wolters

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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

Office Administrator: Skipper Wolters, 773-539-6793, cas@chicagoaudubon.org.

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

### OFFICERS

President: Dave Willard, 312-665-7731, dwillard@fieldmuseum.org

Vice President: Roger Shamley, 773-274-5362, baltodiva2@gmail.com

Treasurer: Jessica Johnson, 312-519-2781, towerlobbyfloor@gmail.com

Secretary: Annette Prince, 630-841-7110, aprincecbcm2@msn.com

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Awards: Alan Anderson, 847-390-7437, casresearch@comcast.net

Birdathon: Dave Willard, 312-665-7731, dwillard@fieldmuseum.org

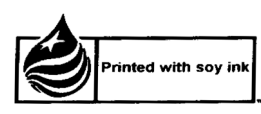
Education Chair: Roger Shamley, 773-274-5362, baltodiva2@gmail.com

Field Trips: Jeff Sanders, 847-657-6431, yellowstart5@yahoo.com

Stewardship: Dave Kosnik, 847-456-6368, skokielaagoons@gmail.com

Nominating: Alan Anderson, 847-390-7437, casresearch@comcast.net

Editorial: Skipper Joy Wolters, 773-539-6793, cas@chicagoaudubon.org





# Congratulations to the Recipients of the Chicago Audubon Society 2015 Environmental Awards!

The Chicago Audubon Society Biennial Environmental Awards honor people from many walks of life for their contributions to conservation and birding in the Chicagoland area. The Board of Directors is pleased to announce the following Awardees for 2015.

<p><i>Excellence in Environmental Reporting</i></p> <p><b>Jeff Reiter</b> Columnist, Daily Herald</p>	<p><i>Protector of the Environment—Educator</i></p> <p><b>Stacy Iwanicki</b> Naturalist, Volo Bog, IDNR</p>	<p><i>Protector of the Environment—Political Service</i></p> <p><b>Toni Preckwinkle</b>, Board President Forest Preserve District, Cook County</p>
<p><i>Protector of the Environment—Single Act (Individual)</i></p> <p><b>John and Jane Balaban</b> Bunker Hill Savanna and North Branch Prairies</p>	<p><i>Protector of the Environment—Single Act (Group)</i></p> <p><b>Loyola University, Reuben Keller and “Science and Society” class</b> (working with Chicago Bird Collision Monitors)</p>	
<p><i>Protector of the Environment—Avocation</i></p> <p><b>Kathleen Marie Garness</b> Botanical Illustrator, Educator, Steward, Monitor</p>	<p><i>Protector of the Environment—Vocation</i></p> <p><b>Doug Taron</b> Curator of Biology, Notebaert Nature Museum</p>	<p><i>Protector of the Environment—Group</i></p> <p><b>Chris Anchor</b> (FPDCC Wildlife Biologist) and <b>Stan Gehrt</b> (Ohio State University): Urban Coyote Study</p>
<p><i>First Friend, Chicago Audubon</i></p> <p><b>North Park Village Nature Center</b></p>	<p><i>Service to Chicago Area Birders</i></p> <p><b>Rena Cohen</b> President, Lake-Cook Audubon</p>	<p><i>Young Environmentalist</i></p> <p><b>Nick Minor</b> Illinois Young Birder</p>

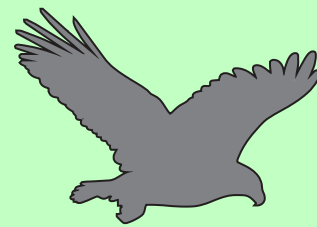
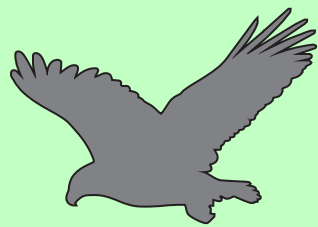
*The Cuban Emerald is known locally as zun-zun. They favor flowers with the highest sugar content—often red-colored and tubular-shaped.*



*Cuban Emerald.  
Photo by Becky Marvil.*

*Many native and cultivated plants on whose flowers they feed heavily rely on them for pollination.*

## Eagle Optics Day



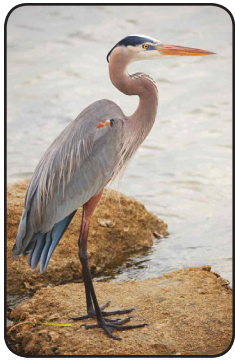
*Saturday, April 18, 2015  
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.*

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. Eagle Optics donates a portion of sales for the day to support the programs of the Chicago Audubon Society. For those who have never attended one of our Eagle Optics Days and have never been to the Nature Center, please call our office for information and directions at 773-539-6793. Parking is free and there will be light refreshments. This event is open to the public. Bring family and friends!

### **Early Morning Bird Walk at Montrose Point, 7:00 a.m.**

This Walk will take place on Eagle Optics Day (April 18) 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., 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.





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](http://www.birdmonitors.net)  
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**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 or charge your membership online ([chicagoaudubon.org](http://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 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Minimum yearly membership: \$25**

Visa  MasterCard  Discover

Exact name on card \_\_\_\_\_

Card number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration date \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail your completed form to:**  
 Chicago Audubon Society • 5801-C North Pulaski Rd • Chicago, IL 60646

**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](http://chicagoaudubon.org)).

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

**Calendar of Events**

**MARCH 28: CHICAGO AUDUBON BIENNIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS BANQUET AND ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING.** *This year the Awards Banquet and Annual Membership meeting are being held on the same evening at the same location: Silver Stallion Restaurant, 1275 Lee / Manheim Avenues (between Algonquin and Oakton) in Des Plaines.*

The Biennial Environmental Awards Banquet begins at 6:00 p.m. (with a cash bar at 5:30 p.m.). The Awards presentation will begin around dessert, followed by the Annual Meeting and the evening's program, *The Birds of Cuba*. See Page 1 for full details.

**APRIL 18: EAGLE OPTICS DAY AT NORTH PARK VILLAGE NATURE CENTER FROM 10:00 a.m. TO 3:00 p.m.** 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. Eagle Optics donates a portion of sales for the day to support the programs of the Chicago Audubon Society.

**APRIL 18: PRE-EAGLE OPTICS DAY BIRD WALK, 7:00 a.m.** This Walk will take place on

**Birdwalks, Workdays, Programs**

Eagle Optics Day (April 18) 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., 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](mailto:yellowstart5@yahoo.com).*

**APRIL AND MAY: EVERY SATURDAY AT 8:00 a.m. CHICAGO AUDUBON BIRD WALKS AT NORTH PARK VILLAGE NATURE CENTER, 5801 North Pulaski Road, Building D.**

It will be migration time and the birds will be passing through! Come join us to walk through the beautiful early 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. Everyone is welcome!*

**ALL YEAR—WEDNESDAYS AND SATURDAYS: BIRD WALKS WOODED ISLAND JACKSON PARK.** Every Wednesday at 7:00 a.m. and every Saturday at 8:00 a.m. 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. Everyone is welcome! *For details and directions, contact Pat Durkin at [pat.durkin@comcast.net](mailto:pat.durkin@comcast.net).*

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

**Reminder to our readers:**

The Compass can be read and enjoyed in color on our website, [chicagoaudubon.org](http://chicagoaudubon.org). Just click on the word "Newsletters" in the top row of links on the home page to visit our archives. Don't miss these wonderful birds in living color! For historical value, we have added a link to the very first Chicago Audubon newsletter. This link is sitting on top of the Archive list. Enjoy!