

Stewards of War Bluff Valley Sanctuary

Shawnee Chapter

Illinois Audubon Society



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Shawnee Chapter

Illinois Audubon Society
www.shawneeaudubon.org

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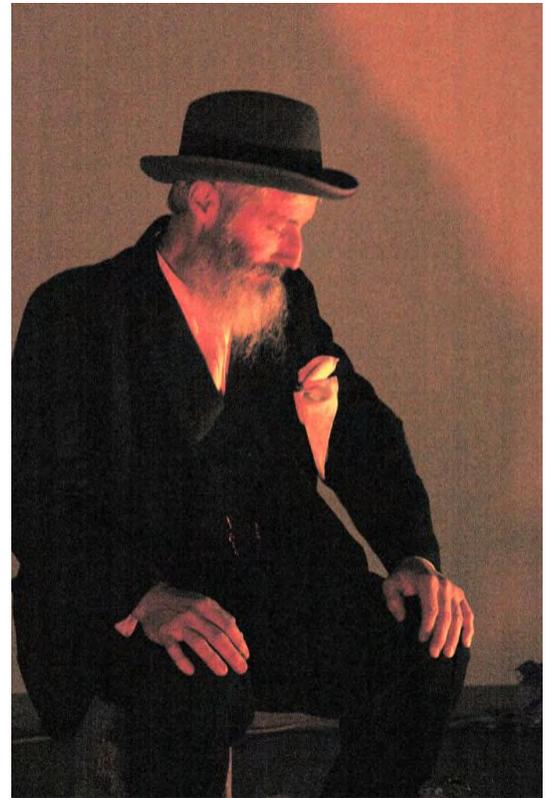
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THE WORLD ACCORDING TO JOHN MUIR

Captivating America with his colorful writings on nature, John Muir emerged over 100 years ago as the lone voice calling from the Wilderness to not simply argue for protection of our forests and mountains, but to invite the public to “come to the woods.” That lone voice from the past can be heard in the present as the Shawnee Chapter of Illinois Audubon Society invites the public to “come to the woods,” at the Trail of Tears State Forest on Monday April 12 at 7:00 pm. John Muir will return to the present around a campfire in the remote setting of the Trail of Tears State Forest as John B. Wallace brings his spirit to life with a living history portrayal of the great conservationist entitled, “The World According to John Muir.”

Known as the Father of Yosemite, John Muir (1838-1914) made the
Continued on page 2.



Be sure save the date – **May 10** at 7 pm – to attend the Shawnee Audubon Chapter’s Annual Meeting with a special presentation on the California condor! We’ll kick the evening off with a brief business meeting and election of officers and directors. Then we’ll get right to our very special presentation. Pat Brown, Grand Canyon,

AZ resident, will be telling us all about the exciting work she has been doing with the California condor release program at the Canyon.

Muir--continued from page 1.

American Wilderness his lifework. The self-described “Tramp” drew recognition for his wilderness expertise from presidents and poets alike. While Muir worked tirelessly in advocating the protection of some of America’s greatest natural heritage, he was a free spirit that was known to disappear for weeks in the Wilderness. He experienced and memorialized a wide array of amazing adventures from his boyhood to the end of his life

An environmental educator and activist, John Wallace received a Bachelor of Science degree in Plant and Soil Science from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. He has been an environmental educator for more than twenty years and was a featured speaker for the Illinois Humanities Council, Road Scholars Speakers Bureau for four years. Wallace is also founding member of Shawnee Audubon Chapter. Wallace has presented the World According to John Muir to groups at various meetings, in libraries and museums, at conferences, at parks and at numerous historical gatherings throughout the Midwest for nearly a decade.

On Monday night, April 12, “come to the woods” at the Trail of Tears State Forest group campsite where John Muir will emerge from a wilderness setting to present an evening of wild adventure tales, gentle philosophical perspectives and impassioned pleas in defense of Wilderness. The group campsite is located behind the picnic area South of State Forest Road. Turn into the picnic area across from the white barn and follow the signs. In case of rain, program will take place in the large CCC picnic shelter. Be sure to dress for cool spring weather. Rustic seating will be provided but lawn chairs may make your experience more comfortable.

For more information contact John at (618)457-6367.



Female red-bellied woodpecker. Photo courtesy of Donna Capliger.

POPE COUNTY SPRING BIRD COUNT AND CAMP-OUT AT WAR BLUFF VALLEY SANCTUARY

May 8 is the Annual Spring Bird Count when birders all over the state will be counting birds. Shawnee Audubon Chapter is calling for helpers for the Pope County count. We’ll split up into teams and try to cover as much of Pope Count as possible.

Everyone is welcome. In fact, the Spring Bird Count is a great way to improve your birding

skills, so we encourage beginners to sign up—we’ll pair you with an experienced birder. And, now is a good time for everyone, experienced or not, to get those field guides and bird song CDs out and start brushing up!

If you plan to help please contact the count compiler, Ann Douglas by the end of April. Ann will divide participants into teams and provide each team with maps and tally sheets. Let Ann know your level of experience and physical condition (e.g. are you able to hike all day or would you prefer a driving route).

Following the count all participants are invited to War Bluff Valley Sanctuary for a party. We’ll enjoy a meal and share stories about our day around a campfire. Everyone is welcome to camp overnight. Let Ann know if you’ll be coming to the party so we know how many to plan for.

FIELD TRIPS NOT TO MISS!

Indian Kitchen State Natural Area--April 18

Much more than a birding trip!



Lusk Creek, a high-quality, clear stream flows at the base of massive sandstone cliffs through the Nature Preserve.
T. Treacy photo

The 1.25 mile hike into Lusk Creek Canyon Nature Preserve -- locally known as Indiana Kitchen -- follows a fairly flat and easy-going trail through the Lusk Creek Wilderness Area in the Shawnee National Forest. The trail traverses old farmsteads that were planted to pine many years ago. Ovenbirds normally start arriving in southern Illinois around April 20 and love pine woods -- so we may be lucky and get to hear and see some of these loud and lovely birds. The Nature Preserve itself is owned by the State of Illinois and is located at the end of ridge overlooking a horseshoe-shaped, 100-foot deep canyon of Lusk Creek. The sandstone glade and sandstone cliff community-types are home to a number of rare plants such as arching dewberry, superb lily and several fern and clubmoss species.

Group size in Wilderness is limited to 10 people, so be sure to get in touch with Anne by April 17 to r.s.v.p. for this field trip. Anne can be reached at anne.parmley@gmail.com or 618.524.9022.

Cave Valley in May 16

Can Birding Get Any Better?

Cave Valley, the last recorded location for breeding Swainson's warbler in Illinois is one of the premier birding spots in all of Illinois--especially during spring migration. Two creeks--Cave Creek and Cedar Creek--running through a mix of bottomland hardwood forest, deciduous and coniferous forest, and scrub/shrub habitat is a virtual bird magnet. From small migrant songbirds to stately Mississippi kites and red-shouldered hawks to raucous fish crows, birds abound in Cave Valley.

Some of the specialities we expect to see include cerulean warbler, worm-eating warbler, American redstart, blue-winged warbler, pine warbler, Nashville and Tennessee warblers, red and white-eyed vireos, northern parula, Louisiana waterthrush, scarlet and summer tanagers, Kentucky warbler, hooded warbler, magnolia warbler and yellow-throated warbler.



Cave Valley is also a great place for wildflowers and other botanicals. If we're lucky we might get to see American feathrfoil (*Hottonia inflata*) on Silvey Pond (photo left).



Mississippi Kite

**INVASIVE PLANT
SPECIES
MINI BIOBLITZ AT
WAR BLUFF VALLEY
SANCTUARY -- MAY 15
9:30AM TO 12:30PM**



War Bluff Valley Sanctuary is a beautiful place with a wide and wonderful array of plants and animals. But, like most everywhere else today, it has its fair share of non-native invasive plant species. So, the Sanctuary has been chosen as the site for an invasive plant species BioBlitz! conducted by Chris Evans, River to River Cooperative Weed Management Area Coordinator.

Participants will learn or brush up on invasive species identification, learn how to inventory infestations with a GPS, and discuss various control and eradication methods. Participants will even get a chance to try out a weed wrench on some of the smaller autumn olive shrubs.

The purpose of the Blitz is twofold: one, to provide a fun, yet educational, way to inform the public about the threat of invasive species to our native flora and fauna; and two, to start a scientific inventory of the invasive species that occur on the Sanctuary.

Lunch will be provided afterwards--please call or email Terri to r.s.v.p. and find out more details -- 618/683.2222 or treacytt@gmail.com.

Garlic mustard is just one of the many invasive species that occur at War Bluff. Autumn olive, microstegium (Japanese stilt grass), multi-flora rose, Japanese honeysuckle, and akebia vine are some of the others found there.

The River to River Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) is a partnership between 12 federal and state agencies, organizations, and universities aimed at coordinating efforts and programs for addressing the threat of invasive plants in Southern Illinois. The CWMA was formally established in 2006 (view our MOU) and addresses both terrestrial and aquatic invasive plant species through collaborative projects and activities focused in the following areas:

Education / Public Awareness
Early Detection & Rapid Response
Prevention
Control and Management
Research

The CWMA is grant funded and projects-based. Our goal is to cooperatively address the short and long-term effects of non-native invasive plants across jurisdictional boundaries within the 11 southern counties of Illinois.

For more information about the CWMA visit the web site at: <http://www.rtrcwma.org/>

ELECTION 2010

The election of officers and directors of Shawnee Audubon Chapter will be held at the Annual Meeting on May 10 at the Carbondale Township Hall. The slate of nominees thus far is listed below. Please note, the Program and Education Chair position is vacant and needs to be filled. Contact our Secretary, Hank Mulder, to make a nomination (including yourself) for any of the positions. The election shall be by ballot unless there is but one nominee for each office, in which case the Secretary will be instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for the slate. A quorum of 1/5 of the voting membership shall be required in order to hold elections.

Officers:

Andrea Douglas, President
Georgia Norman, Vice-President
Henry "Hank" Mulder, Secretary
Debbie Hogg, Treasurer

Directors:

John Wallace, Conservation Chair
Anne Parmley, Birding Chair
Kevin Nagele, Sanctuary Chair
Vacant, Program and Education
Terri Treacy, IAS Representative



What might look more like dark smudges high in the tree tops are actually heron nests. The nests are constructed of large sticks lined with smaller twigs and leaves. There are often several nests on the same tree. Our birders counted around 50 nests in the rookery.

shovelers. A few scaup, bufflehead, ring-necked ducks and a ruddy duck were present. Flickers seemed to be hanging out in groups of five or six eating on the levee banks. A kingfisher chattered across the lake. The usual avians were there too: bluebirds, goldfinches, crows, pileated woodpeckers, titmouse, chickadees and others. A very nice viewing was of a rusty blackbird picking through leaf debris in the woods. It was a good day to see who was here.

The next Shawnee Chapter trip was to Fort Massac on March 14 to check out the great blue heron rookery. After last year's ice storm, we weren't sure what the status of the nests would be. But at least fifty nests were counted with 26 great blue herons perched in trees with three of them actually squatted down in the nests--the rookery survived.

We also saw brown creepers and wood ducks. The hairy and downy woodpeckers sounded off fairly close to each other to contrast their sound and see the bill sizes. Plenty of white-throated sparrows and juncos were still around and song sparrows sang. A brown thrasher flew into the grape tangles and the warm brown tail of a hermit thrush was seen. The rest of him stayed hidden. Again the usual species were there: cardinals, robins, chickadees, carolina wrens, etc

Soon the migrants will be arriving or passing through and we'll be checking them out. Come with us April 18 to search Indian Kitchen in Lusk Creek Wilderness or on May 16 when we go to Cave Valley near Pomona. Good birding to you all.

WHO'S HERE?

Winter seems like a bleak time to go bird watching but the Mermet Lake State Conservation Area trip on February 21 offered some interesting sights. If a bald eagle is seen, I always count that as a grand sighting and we saw two, just perched in trees surveying the lake. I suppose they were trying to decide what they would have for lunch; mallards are tasty but maybe the common goldeneyes would be a special treat. Would the hooded mergansers be worth the effort? Then again, they may just have been people watching - us. I think one of them flew over to the other to make a snide remark but I might be wrong.

As usual there were plenty of Canada goose and a good number of northern

WAR BLUFF BRIEF

Cut and hauled off the remains of the maple tree trimming job.



Readied bluebird nest boxes for spring.



Remodeling portion of barn for equipment and tool storage.



ROOTS AND BRANCHES: MIGRATION TO THE LOWER OHIO AND MISSISSIPPI VALLEY CONFERENCE

Shawnee Audubon Chapter participated in the recent Roots and Branches: Migration to the Lower Ohio and Mississippi Valley Conference. The conference, which took place March 4-6, was sponsored by SIUC Center for Delta Studies. Georgia Norman, prepared a poster presentation on the migration patterns of both Monarch butterflies and hummingbirds for Friday morning of the conference. On an absolutely beautiful southern Illinois Saturday, John Wallace, Andrea Douglas and Georgia organized and guided a group from the conference on a tour of the Cache River Wetlands area.



The first stop was the Henry Barkhausen Cache River Wetland Center. The group then enjoyed lunch at Wineaux's Restaurant at the Cache River Winery.



The group then headed to Heron Pond at the Cache River State Natural Area to hike the Heron Pond Trail.



Along the hike they saw a dramatic example of the work a pileated woodpecker can do in search of carpenter ants. About 6 inches from ground and extended about 3 feet high.

The sight of the stately cypress tree reflected in the clear water from the boardwalk was awe-inspiring. visited the state champ cherry bark oak tree.



Further along the trail the group then visited the state record cherry bark oak. As you can see from the photo it took seven adults to reach fingertip to fingertip to completely circle the tree.

Article by Georgia Norman.
Photos by Kayeleigh

SAVE STAMPS FOR WILDLIFE!



Shawnee Audubon Chapter
Illinois Audubon Society
PO Box 73
Carbondale, IL 62903

Join Us at War Bluff Valley Sanctuary

War Bluff Valley Sanctuary is a beautiful place. If you've never been there or if you only get out there once in a while, you ought to see what you're missing. Come for a visit anytime or come to volunteer on **Stewardship Day the second Saturday of every month**---bring work gloves, water and a sack lunch. We start about 9:30 am. Call 618.683.2222 for more details or if the weather in inclement.

Directions to War Bluff Valley Sanctuary

From Golconda, follow Rte. 146 about 3 miles to Bushwack Road. There is a brown Wildlife Viewing Sign before the road. Turn left and follow 2.5 miles to Sanctuary entrance.
Sanctuary phone: 618.683.2222

SHAWNEE AUDUBON CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

As a member of Shawnee Audubon Society (SAS) you will receive newsletters and event announcements plus membership in the Illinois Audubon Society (IAS). As a member of IAS you will be part of Illinois' oldest conservation organization and you will receive *Illinois Audubon*, the IAS quarterly magazine and the *Cardinal News*, the IAS newsletter.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone: _____ Email _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES (INCLUDES ILLINOIS AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$18 | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend \$43 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$31 | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing \$58 | <input type="checkbox"/> Eagle Club \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$38 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$75 | <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinal Club \$1000 |

Pay by check or credit card! Make checks payable to:
Illinois Audubon Society-Shawnee Chapter - OR - fill out your credit card information below.

Circle: Visa Mastercard AMEX Discover

Card Number: _____

Exp Date: (MM)____ (YYYY)____ Signature: _____

Mail to: Illinois Audubon Society, PO Box 2547, Springfield, IL 62708-2457