



Southern Illinois Audubon Society

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P.O. Box 222
Carbondale, IL 62903-0222

NEWSLETTER

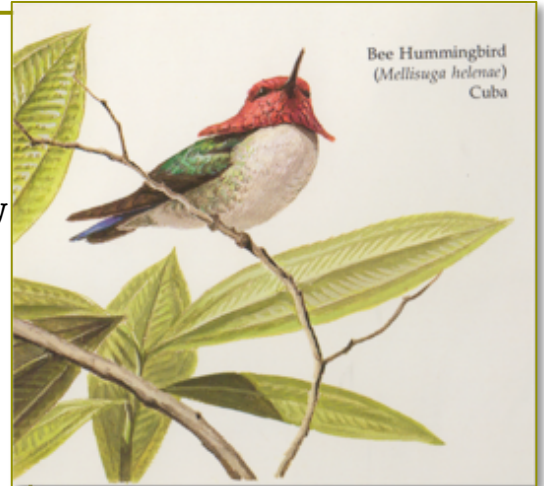
Established in 1970

Hummingbirds of the World

John Schwegman will give a talk on the Hummingbirds of the World for SIAS on Friday, September 25th. The program will be held at the Fellowship Hall of the First United Methodist Church, 214 W. Main St., Carbondale, at 7 p.m.

John's Hummingbirds of the World talk will give an overview of the biology and evolution of today's Hummingbirds including photos of 77 of the world's 342 known species. While now limited to the Americas and West Indies, fossils reveal that they once lived in Europe as well. The Hummingbirds that have been photographed in the wild by the John Schwegman family (except the Bee Hummer from Cuba) include 56 from South and Central America, 10 from North America, and 5 of the 18 West Indian Hummers. One image shows the number of Hummers by country. The images include the Giant Hummingbird, Racket-tailed, Sword-billed, and Bee Hummer. Some of the "primitive" Hermit Hummers and several of the species restricted to just a few small valleys in the Andes are shown as well. While tiny, the Hummingbirds are among the most colorful and beautiful of birds. Their iridescent feathers literally shine like neon when the light strikes them. Come and see some of the most colorful birds in the world.

John is a lifelong naturalist who had a long career as a botanist with the IL Dept. of Conservation and IL Dept. of Natural Resources. He was instrumental in forming the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission and continues to serve on the board. Since John's retirement, John and Martha have continued to study wildlife, including mussels, dragonflies, birds and plants.



Bee Hummingbird
(*Mellisuga helenae*)
Cuba

2015 Meetings Calendar

Oct. 23rd: Dr. Loretta Battaglia on *Everglades Restoration Plan*

Nov./Dec.-Dec. 4th : John Schwegman on *The Galapagos*

Jan. 22nd: SIAS Annual Meeting with potluck, program, silent auction, and election of officers.

Keeping Up with our Affiliated Organizations

SIAS is an official affiliate of three other environmental organizations through paying annual dues and giving support to their worthwhile activities. Here's how individual SIAS members can do the same:

ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY (IAS). Now in its 118th year, IAS is an outstanding non-profit dedicated to bird conservation through many avenues. Lately, IAS has primarily focused on habitat conservation and restoration through its revolving Land Acquisition Fund, which purchases property for later resale to government agencies or environmental partnerships.

IAS has 21 chapters and 21 affiliates throughout the state. It holds two statewide meetings a year and is headquartered in a charming, restored farmhouse at Adams Sanctuary north of downtown Springfield. On spring mornings, Adams can host migrant fallout along its wooded trails, a green oasis in an urban city.

IAS publishes an excellent quarterly magazine (the Summer 2015 issue includes an article on "Bringing Alligator Snapping Turtles Back to Illinois" and two about Amboy Marsh in northern Illinois). Yearly dues begin at \$25. Visit illinoisaudubon.org; write to Illinois Audubon Society, PO Box 2547, Springfield, IL 62708; or call (217) 544-2473.

NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY (NABS). This very active non-profit is devoted to all cavity-nesting bird species. It publishes a 32-page quarterly magazine full of news and tips for operating bluebird trails or just simply setting up and maintaining a box or two on individual properties.

SIAS became an affiliate through its own 27-year sponsorship of the 200-box trail at Crab Orchard NWR in Williamson County.

NABS hosts an annual conference every year. The next, on Sept. 17-29, will be in Quebec, Canada. Lots of field outings and interesting speakers. Worth the trip to a beautiful country!

Yearly dues begin at \$20. Visit nabluebirdsociety.org; write to North American Bluebird Society, PO Box 7844, Bloomington, IN 47407 or orinfo@nabluebirdsociety.org.

ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL (IEC). Our group joins many large and small conservation organizations in helping to support this important lobby group based in Springfield. IEC was founded in 1975 "to serve as the environmental community's eyes, ears, and voice in Springfield."

For more information: [facebook.com/ilenviro](https://www.facebook.com/ilenviro); write to Illinois Environmental Council, 230 Broadway, Ste 150, Springfield, IL 62701.

- Laraine Wright

Study of Backyard Bird Predation Yields Surprising Finding

Every time we plant a tree or a bush to attract birds to our yards a little warning sometimes sounds in our minds: "Will this also attract an animal predator?"

But a recent study in Ohio shows that there is no difference in predation rates between yards with few plantings and those with many. The common daytime predators are squirrel, domestic cat, common grackle, brown-headed cowbird, and blue jay. The nighttime predators are commonly raccoons and opossums in suburban areas (which nevertheless account for just 13 percent of deaths).

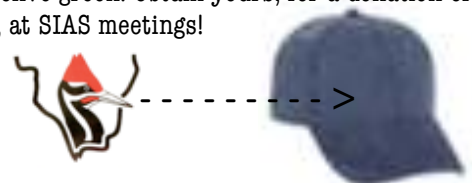
However, you can greatly decrease bird predation in general in your yard by doing the following: don't leave cat or dog food out in bowls in your yard. That can double the presence of cats, skunks, raccoons, and other predators. Take this food in every night.

Also, don't allow spilled seed to stay on the ground below feeders. How we do this is the problem, of course. While I rarely put out seed in the summer months (safflower only, plus peanut pick-outs year-round), like most of you I am constantly filling all kinds of feeders in wintertime.

This particular predation study, summarized in a recent issue of "Bluebird" by the North American Bluebird Society, suggests you put wide pans under each feeder and bring those pans in at night. - Laraine Wright

New Batch of SIAS Caps in New Colors!

SIAS now has a new batch of caps with our Pileated Woodpecker logo, available in an array of colors including navy blue, royal blue, pink, khaki, and olive green. Obtain yours, for a donation of \$15, at SIAS meetings!



Upcoming Events & Outings-

CONWR Wildlife & Wild Places Photo Contest

Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge is again sponsoring their Wildlife & Wild Places photo contest. Categories include: landscape/scenic, wildlife, flowers/plants/trees/fungi, youth (17 & under), and photos taken on the Crab Orchard Refuge.

To enter, submit photos to the Crab Orchard Visitor's Center by Oct. 12th. For complete entry information visit the Friends of Crab Orchard website below or phone 618.998.5933 <http://www.friendsofconwr.com/en/photo-contest.html>

Sept. 19th – Monarch Migration & Tagging

The Monarch Watch Association, based at the University of Kansas, has been tagging and monitoring migrating Monarch flutterbys since 1992. Attend their Monarch Migration program at the Cache River Wetlands Center, at the intersection of IL Rt. 37 and Perks Road, to learn about the Monarch's life then, spend the rest of the day capturing and tagging Monarch butterflies as part of Monarch Watch. For more info, phone the Wetlands Center at 618.657.2064.

Sept. 26th – IAS Fall Gathering & Annual Meeting

The Illinois Audubon Society's (IAS) Fall Gathering & 118th Annual Members Meeting will be held in the Trutter Center at Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, IL. It will include a meeting, presentations and optional field trips to Lincoln Memorial Garden and Adams Wildlife Sanctuary. For full details or to register, visit:

<https://www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowEventDetails?ID=2046&EID=20542>

Oct. 17th – Owls and What They Eat

This is your opportunity to dissect an owl pellet and learn some other interesting facts about the "wise old owl". Master Naturalist Denise Smith will lead this 1-hour program at the Cache River Wetlands Center, starting at 1 p.m. For more info, phone the Wetlands Center at 618.657.2064.

Jan. 3-11, 2016 – Birds & Natural History of Costa Rica

Join Professor Nelda Hinckley and Trevor Hinckley for some eco-trekking in Costa Rica, January 3-11, 2016. Wake up your first day to the tropical dawn chorus of the New World tropics. Visit the La Selva Biological Station, Cerro de la Muerte, the Savegre River, and the Carara National Park. Tour pricing is based on double-occupancy and a minimum of 10 paying participants. For complete details, including tour cost, contact Nelda at 618.549.7335 ext. 8820, 618.564.5588, or neldahinckley@jalc.edu

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Want to See Earth's Super Predator?

Look in the mirror! According to research published in the August 21, 2015 edition of Science, extreme human predatory behavior is responsible for widespread wildlife extinctions, shrinking fish sizes and disruptions to global food chains. These are extreme outcomes that non-human predators seldom impose, according to the article. Lead researcher Chris Darimont, a professor of geography at the University of Victoria, stated, "Our wickedly efficient killing technology, global economic systems and resource management that prioritize short-term benefits to humanity have given rise to the human super predator. Our impacts are as extreme as our behavior and the planet bears the burden of our predatory dominance."

The team's global analysis indicates that humans typically exploit adult fish populations at 14 times the rate than do marine predators. Humans also hunt and kill large land carnivores such as bears, wolves and lions at nine times the rate that these predatory animals kill each other in the wild. Researchers noted that in some cases, dwindling species of predatory land carnivores are more aggressively hunted for trophies, due to the premium placed on rare prey.

The result of human activity on wildlife populations is far greater than natural predation. Research suggests that socio-political factors can explain why humans repeatedly overexploit. Technology explains how: Humans use advanced killing tools, cheap fossil fuel, and professional harvesters – like high-volume commercial fishing fleets – to overcome the defensive adaptations of prey. Humanity also departs fundamentally from predation in nature by targeting adult quarry. Co-author Tom Reimchen, a biology professor at University of Victoria, stated, "Whereas predators primarily target the juveniles or 'reproductive interest' of populations, humans draw down the 'reproductive capital' by exploiting adult prey."

During four decades of fieldwork on Haida Gwaii, an archipelago on the northern coast of British Columbia, Reimchen looked at how human predators differ from other predators in nature. Reimchen's predator-prey research revealed that predatory fish and diving birds overwhelmingly killed juvenile forms of freshwater fish. Collectively, 22 predator species took no more than five per cent of the adult fish each year. Nearby, Reimchen observed a stark contrast: fisheries exclusively targeted adult salmon, taking 50 per cent or more of the runs.

The authors conclude with an urgent call to reconsider the concept of "sustainable exploitation" in wildlife and fisheries management. A truly sustainable model, they argue, would mean cultivating cultural, economic and institutional change that places limits on human activities to more closely follow the behavior of natural predators. Darimont said, "We should be protecting our wildlife and marine assets as an investor would in a stock portfolio."

Complete article at: <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/349/6250/858>



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Affiliate of the Illinois Audubon Society,
the Illinois Environmental Council,
& the North American Bluebird Society



Keep your eyes to the skies. Watch for a Swallow-tailed Kite. One is currently in the Springfield area and will most likely soon be migrating back south. And it is Nighthawk migration time. Watch for large flocks of nighthawks flying south, dropping down out of nowhere then disappearing back up in the sky and listen for their "peent" calls.