



Southern Illinois Audubon Society

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NEWSLETTER

The Galapagos

John Schwegman will give a talk on the Galapagos for SIAS on Friday, December 4th. The program will be held at the Fellowship Hall of the First United Methodist Church, 214 W. Main St., Carbondale, at 7 p.m.

In 1993 John and Martha Schwegman visited the Galapagos Islands, touring six of the larger Islands and some small ones as well. They also visited the Charles Darwin Research Center where propagation of Galapagos Tortoises was underway. Travel was by a tour boat sleeping 16 international passengers. Notable wildlife to be shown during the program will be Marine and Land Iguanas, nesting Waved Albatrosses, several of Darwin's Finches, endemic birds like the Lava Heron, Swallow-tailed Gull, Lava Gull, Galapagos Penguin, and the endemic Galapagos Fur Seal. A short visit to a "primitive" nature lodge in the Ecuadoran Amazon will close the program.

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.



Swallow-tailed Gull

2016 Meetings Calendar

Jan. 22nd: Annual Meeting with potluck, silent auction, and election of officers. Program: Mr. Mark H.X. Glenshaw on Owls
Feb. 26th: Program to be announced

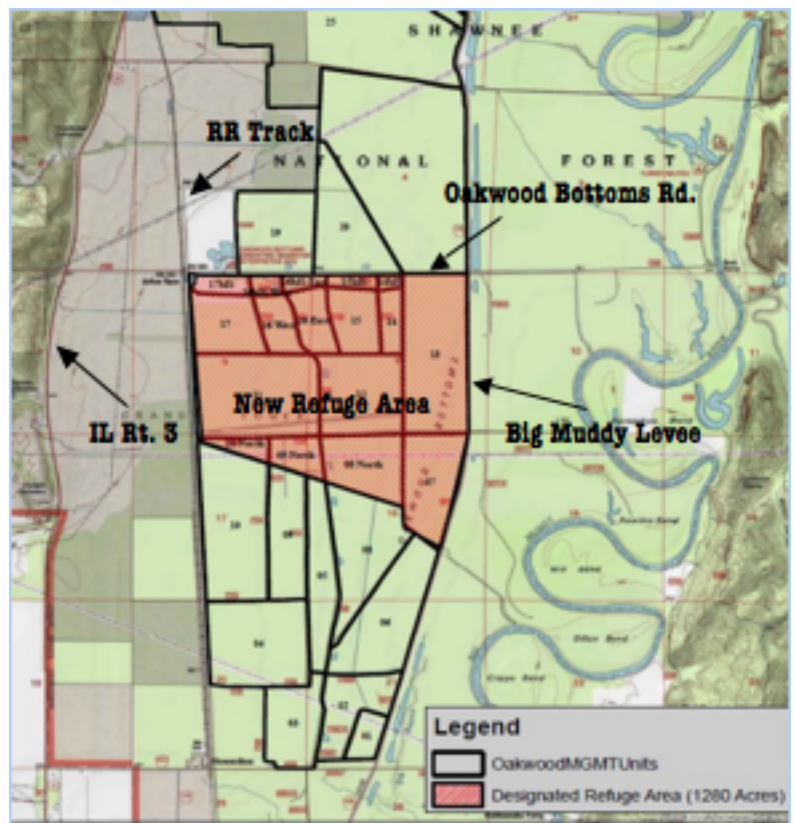
Section of Oakwood Bottoms is Now A Refuge - Seasonally Closed To Hunting

The scarcity of quality waterfowl area has caused the Shawnee National Forest to designate a new waterfowl refuge area. The new area is at the Oakwood Bottoms Greentree Reservoir. This popular place for hunting, fishing and nature viewing will be designated for waterfowl from Oct. 31, 2015 thru Jan. 12, 2016. This coincides with the beginning with the 2015 waterfowl season to provide resting and feeding areas for tens of thousands of waterfowl.

The designated waterfowl refuge will be closed from 14 days prior to waterfowl hunting season to the end of waterfowl hunting season in the southern central zone. It will be a trial period of 3 to 5 years, with the possibility of becoming more permanent. No walking access or hunting will be permitted in the designated waterfowl refuge.

The waterfowl refuge closure is supposed to help increase the number of resident and migratory waterfowl using Oakwood Bottoms. It would then increase the recreational qualities of the area for nature viewing and hunting activities in the Oakwood Bottoms area. The designated area will have signs up marking the boundaries, to allow waterfowl species to go undisturbed and find refuge.

Those found in violation within the waterfowl refuge area between Oct. 31, 2015 and Jan. 12, 2016 will be ticketed. For more information contact Chad Deaton, wildlife biologist with the Shawnee National Forest at 618.833.8576 or go to the Shawnee National Forest website www.fs.esda.gov/shawnee.



Upcoming Events & Outings

Dec. 3 – Cypress Creek NWR Holiday Open House

Celebrate the holiday season with the staff and friends at Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge, 0137 Rustic Campus Drive, Ullin. There will be good food and good friends from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For details, call the Refuge at 618.634.2231

Dec. 5 > SIAS Outing: Birding for Raptors

Join Don Mullison, SIAS Outings Chair, on a birding outing focusing on raptors. Weather permitting, meet on the north side of Murdale Shopping Center parking lot, West Main St., Carbondale, at 9 a.m. for carpooling. Don will lead the group to Union County Refuge and Oakwood Bottoms and some levee roads in a search mainly for hawks, eagles and falcons but, of course, the group will stop for any other birds of interest encountered. The outing will finish up at Oakwood Bottoms between 1 - 2 p.m. People who needed to, could of course head home sooner. For more info, contact Don at 618.203.2869.

Dec. 10 > The Geology of Hicks Dome

Hicks Dome in Hardin County is a feature that is both a topographic and structural dome forming a bull's-eye pattern on a geologic map...almost a volcano. Brett Dennty with the IL State Geological Survey will give a presentation on Hicks Dome at 67 p.m. at the Carbondale Township hall, 216 E. Monroe St., Carbondale for The Shawnee Group Sierra Club.

Dec. 6 > Southern Illinois Alternative Gift Fair

The Alternative Gift Fair is an opportunity for gift shopping that supports local not-for-profit organizations. Unique gifts are available to purchase, including local art and jewelry, games, toys, gift memberships, and much more! Location: Carbondale Civic Center from 2-5 p.m. For more info phone 618.534.1162.

Dec. 13 > Birding at Crab Orchard NW Refuge

Don Mullison will be leading a birding outing at Crab Orchard on Sunday, Dec. 13th. People need to call Crab Orchard NWR Visitor's Center at 618.997.3344, to register in advance. This will, at least in part, focus on waterfowl. Participants will likely be visiting parts of the closed portion of Crab Orchard - a treat for some. Weather permitting, meet at the Visitor's Center at 8 a.m. The trip should wrap up between 11 and noon.

Dec. 13 > SIU Free Public Astronomy Observation

There will be a free special public astronomy observation hosted by the SIU Carbondale Physics Department at the SIU Farms Dark Site from 11 p.m. to 2 a.m. The Geminids Meteor Shower will peak this evening with dark skies due to a new Moon making up to 120 meteors visible per hour. Also visible this evening: Jupiter, Orion Nebula, M31 (Andromeda). For details, phone 618.453.2729

Jan 9th – SIAS's Mid Winter Eagle Surveys

Eagle Survey(s) will be held on Saturday, 01/09. *Rain date: is on Sunday 01/10.* SIAS coordinates two routes, one in Union and one in Alexander Counties. For Union Co. details contact Cathie Hutcheson at 618.529.2022. For Alexander Co. details contact Rhonda Rothrock at 618.684.6605 or meet in the parking lot of Anna Walmart, off IL Rt. 146 east of Anna, at 8:30 a.m. for carpooling.

Dec. 14 - Jan. 5 > 116th Christmas Bird Count Season

All are welcome to participate in this the 116th year of these all-day censuses of winter bird populations. Every citizen scientist who annually braves snow, wind, or rain to take part in a Christmas Bird Count makes an enormous contribution to conservation. **Find more details or find a count near you at** <http://birds.audubon.org/get-involved-christmas-bird-count> **or contact a local compiler. See the following list of local counts.**

Cypress Creek NWR- Dec. 14 - Meet for assignments at Shawnee Comm. College Bldg. D, Rustic Campus Drive, Ullin, at 6:00 a.m. For details, phone Cypress Creek NWR 618.634.2231.

Big Oak Tree St. Pk. (MO)- Dec. 17 - Meet on Count Day at 6:00 a.m. at the restaurant at Boomland, on the southeast corner of the interchange at the Charleston, MO, off I-57. Contact compiler Dr. Bill Eddleman at weddleman@semo.com.

Rend Lake- Dec. 19 - Advanced registration required, contact compiler Keith McMullen at 618.632.1057/warbler7@sbcglobal.net.

War Bluff Valley- Dec. 19 - For details contact Andrea Douglas, compiler at 618.564.2079 / anderatd@yahoo.com.

Carlyle Lake- Dec. 21 (tentative) - Advanced registration required, contact compiler Dan Kassebaum at 618.233.5451/kdan@htc.net. Meet for assignments at the McDonald's near the Lake entrance at 6 a.m.

Crab Orchard NWR- Dec. 22- Advanced registration required, contact compiler Vicki Lang-Mendenhall at 618.687.9868.

Marion County- Dec. ?? - Meet in the parking lot of the Raccoon School, just west of I-57 at the Centralia exit at 6:00 a.m. Contact compiler Joe Merkelbach at 618.532.3112/jemerke@ecologyfund.net.

Arklands/Pyramid St. Pk.- Dec. 27 (tentative) - Meet on site at the intersection of Pyatts Blacktop and Panda Bear Rd. at 6:00 a.m. Contact compiler Joe Merkelbach at 618.532.3112/jemerke@ecologyfund.net.

Horseshoe Lake (Alexander Co.)- Dec. 28 - Advanced registration required. Meet in parking lot at the intersection of Rt. 3 & Miller City Rd., Olive Branch, at 6:30 a.m. Contact compiler Vern Kleen at 217.787.3515 / vkleen@comcast.net.

Union County- Dec. 29 - Advance registration required. Meet at the intersection of IL Rt. 3 and IL Rt.124 (in Ware) at 6:30 a.m. Contact compiler Vern Kleen at 217.787.3515 / vkleen@comcast.net.

Mermet Lake- Dec. 30 - Advance registration required. For assignments contact assistant compiler Rhonda Rothrock at 618.684.6605 / woodthrusheola@hotmail.com.

Middle Mississippi River NWR- Dec. 31 - Meet at Middle Miss office, 1293 Rocky Hollow Road, Rockwood at 6:30 a.m. Contact compiler John Hartleb at 618.763.4420 or Rhonda Rothrock at 618.684.6605.

Jackson County- Jan. 1 - Advance registration required. For assignments contact compiler Rhonda Rothrock at 618.684.6605 / woodthrusheola@hotmail.com. Compilation and soup (by Chef Anton) at sunset, at the home of David and Anton Kvernes, Skyline Dr., Carbondale. *Jackson County CBC feeder watchers wanted!! Email or snail mail your feeder bird list to Rhonda by Jan. 3rd.*

Eco-Trek: 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

28th Annual Tropical Adventure / June 3-11, 2016

Trinidad & Tobago: Experience a tropical evergreen rain forest, a mangrove, tide pools, a tropical deciduous forest, a giant Leatherback Turtle watch, and West Indian cuisine. More details, contact: Nelda W. Hinckley at 618.549.5588 or neldahinckley@jalc.edu

Seeing Birds

The Operation Migration Whooping Crane Class of 2015 is slightly behind schedule when compared to last year. This is due, in large part, to the weather. The team cannot guide the cranes if winds come too strongly from the south. As of 11/24, the Whoopers and their entourage had made it to their Kentucky stopover, after having spent 2.5 weeks in Illinois. By this time last year, the 2014 class had made it to Pike, Alabama, a hop and a jump from the Florida wintering home. Whooper Cranes from past classes are being spotted in various locations from Indiana and Tennessee to Alabama. Keep a look out for both Sandhill Cranes and Whoopers. They're showing up in southernmost Illinois more often each year.

Twice in early November while driving south on IL Rt. 3 through Rockwood in the late afternoon, Rhonda Rothrock encountered a massive flock of crows flying high overhead. This large number of crows, several hundred, was flying west from the bluffs toward the Mississippi River. It appeared they were all gathering at a nighttime roost location.

Nancy Garwood and Richard reported seeing fine Pine Siskins at their birdfeeder on 11/08.

On 11/20, Don Mullison located a Northern Saw-whet Owl along the Rocky Bluff Trail at Crab Orchard N.W. Refuge.

Another Snowy winter? As of 11/50, reports of some 68 Snowy Owls had come from 36 counties in Wisconsin. Five Snowy Owls had been reported in Illinois as far south as Cumberland County. This is seen as early as irruptive migration years go. Body condition for at least some birds remains a concern and observers are asked to enjoy the birds from a distance. If you think a bird may be sick or injured, contact your local DNR office or wildlife rehabilitator for assistance.

Collapsing Greenland glacier could raise sea levels by half a metre, say scientists

A major glacier in Greenland that holds enough water to raise global sea levels by half a metre has begun to crumble into the North Atlantic Ocean, scientists say. The huge Zachariae Isstrom glacier in northeast Greenland started to melt rapidly in 2012 and is now breaking up into large icebergs where the glacier meets the sea, monitoring has revealed. The calving of the glacier into chunks of floating ice will set in train a rise in sea levels that will continue for decades to come, the US team warns.

Jeremie Mouginot, University of California, and his colleagues drew on 40 years of satellite data and aerial surveys to show that the enormous Zachariae Isstrom glacier began to recede three times faster from 2012, with its retreat speeding up by 125 metres per year every year until the most recent measurements in 2015.

The bleak assessment of the glaciers' retreat comes only months after Nasa launched an urgent six year project called Oceans Melting Greenland, aptly contracted to OMG, to understand the processes that drive the loss of Greenland ice.

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/nov/12/collapsing-greenland-glacier-could-raise-sea-levels-by-half-a-metre-say-scientists>

Western Amazon Wildlife Respond to Unmarked Roads

A study investigated the potential for biodiversity impacts from an unmarked road within a rainforest-protected area in Western Amazonia. It focused on three key taxonomic groups; amphibians, butterflies and birds, each of which have been shown to be both sensitive and reliable indicators of forest disturbance.

Amphibians and butterflies were studied and 645 birds representing 77 different species were captured using mist netting and 877 bird records representing 79 different species were recorded using point counts. The study provides evidence to show that the presence of a small, unmarked road significantly altered levels of faunal species richness, diversity, relative abundance and community structure.

The study found increasing proximity to the road had a negative effect on amphibian and understory bird communities, whilst butterfly and overall diurnal bird communities responded positively. It showed that the impact on biodiversity extends up to at least 32 % of the whole reserve area. This work provides support to limit the networks of unmarked roads in order to realistically and effectively preserve natural levels of tropical biodiversity. *Biodiversity and Conservation*, 24: 1657-1670.

Did You Know: Many birds, including Wild Turkey, routinely eat poison ivy berries. Deer and other mammals browse on the very leaves that cause susceptible humans so much misery.

There are 20 known species of armadillo, but only one—the nine-banded armadillo—has ventured out of Latin America. The species arrived in Texas during the 1880s and has been spreading into new habitats ever since...moving further north and east into new territories once thought unsuitable for the warm-weather creatures.

Snowy owls nest in the Arctic tundra of the northernmost stretches of Alaska, Canada, and Eurasia. They winter south through Canada and northern Eurasia, with irruptions occurring further south in some years. And, thanks to Harry Potter (& J.K. Rowling), Snowy Owls are one of the most well-known birds in the world.

To Join SIAS or Renew Your Membership, please fill in this form and return it with payment. Thank You!

Individual Member	\$15	Your Name _____
Family	\$25	Street Address _____
Student Voting Member	\$ 5	City, State, Zip _____
Donation	_____	Phone Number _____
Amount Enclosed	\$ _____	Email _____

Mail to:
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Attn: Membership
P.O. Box 222
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I/We would like to received our newsletter via email: **YES / NO**

Annual membership renewal month is January and coincides with board elections held at the annual meeting each January.
 Member mailing labels reflect current dues status.

Help Save Kentucky Streams & the Arrow Darter

Big Coal has already blown the tops off of 500 mountains. Then they dump millions of tons of debris and toxic waste into the streams and valleys below.

The colorful little Kentucky arrow darter lives in Appalachia, where the coal industry has already destroyed an area the size of Delaware and is destroying the darter's only habitat through mountaintop removal mining. The arrow darter was once found in 74 streams, but today it's only in 38. Nearly half of that loss happened in the last twenty years - since mountaintop removal mining became widespread and polluted the water with metals and other contaminants.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agrees that the arrow darter is in grave danger and they're considering protecting it under the Endangered Species Act. Your comment can save this unique fish from near-extinction and prevent more devastation from mountaintop removal mining. Sign the Sierra Club's petition: <http://sierra.force.com/actions/National?actionId=AR0029445&id=70131000001Lp1FAAS#.VlXYle1EU7U1232>

Can You Tell A Wattle From A Snood?

A lot of turkey talk will take place between Thanksgiving and New Years so here's a bit of info to add to the conversations. Male, tom, turkeys have a number of features that are believed to attract female, hen, turkeys. First, there's the red "wattle" area on the male's neck and throat. Second, there's the red "snood" mass over their beak. Most male turkeys also have a "beard", made of specialized feathers, on their breasts. Also, males attract hens by displaying. This "strutting" includes puffing up their body feathers, spreading out their tail feathers, and dragging their wings. This behavior attracts females (& hunters).



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*Affiliate of the Illinois Audubon Society,
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