



# Southern Illinois Audubon Society

## NEWSLETTER

September 2021 – Vol. 28 No. 7

P.O. Box 222  
Carbondale, IL 62903-0222  
Established in 1970

### The September SIAS Program will be on Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> Outdoor Raptor Program at Giant City St. Park

Join SIAS members for our September program at 5:30 PM on Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> at Giant City State Park, Shelter #5. Bev Shofstall of Free Again Wildlife Rehab will provide an outdoor program with several of her raptor associates. Shelter #5 is located south of the Visitor Center, at the intersection of Giant City Rd. and Giant City Lodge Rd., across from the Post Oak Trail entrance. SIAS will provide lemonade and a light snack. Feel free to bring a sack meal if you prefer. State COVID restrictions will apply.

Note that the 17<sup>th</sup> is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month, not the 4<sup>th</sup>. The monthly meeting date was changed for September to avoid conflicts. For Oct. and Nov/Dec. meetings/programs, the Board is taking it day by day, week by week as stated in our last newsletter. We're leaning toward outdoor events, a plan that should work for Oct. and maybe even Nov/Dec.

Merriam-Webster defines *normal* : conforming to a type, standard, or regular pattern : characterized by that which is considered usual, typical or routine. COVID has disrupted what was considered to be normal. Some say this might be the new normal. Maybe it would be better referred to as the new abnormal because when has life as we know it ever really been normal. *-Rhonda R*



### It Was Wonderful to See Everyone Who Attended the Picnic

Two dozen members (and a couple pets) congregated at the big Trail of Tears shelter to visit and feast from an amazing spread that included home grown tomatoes, paw paw bread pudding, and Martha's always delicious rhubarb pie! SIAS provided locally sourced grain fed beef burgers and bison hot dogs as well as a veggie burger option. To our Grillmasters Cathie Hutcheson and Joe Merkelbach, who worked at the grill nearly the whole evening, a big Thank You for your labors. Job well done! (No pun intended.)

We extend a great big Thank You to Vicki Lang-Mendenhall as well for her outstanding job organizing the event, securing a great location, and acquiring all the other necessary supplies including the grillables. The locale and time of day were practically perfect (and not uncomfortably hot.) If it were not for all the advance efforts needed, I'd say make every meeting a picnic. And to those who were unable to attend, we hope to see you soon! *-Rhonda R.*

### What Happening in Southernmost IL...

...besides days getting shorter, temps getting cooler, wild flowers and grasses going to seed, & songbirds migrating

#### Crab Orchard Refuge Clean-Up Day – Sept. 18th

Due to CoVid guidelines, assignments will be made in advance. Call the Refuge at 618.997.3344, ext. 1, for more details or to register.

#### What a Journey – Sept. 18th

Presentation at the Cache River Wetlands Center from 10 AM-Noon. Phone 618.657.2064 for more detail or to reserve a seat.

#### SIAS Bird Blitzer's Big Sit at CONWR – Sept. 25th

Details on reverse page.

#### How to Get Over Your Fear of Snakes – Oct. 2nd

Jeremy Schumacher, Forester and reptile enthusiast, will talk about these often misunderstood creatures. This program will be held from 10-11:30 AM at the Giant City Visitors Center. Space is limited. Registration required, phone 618.457.4836.

## Seeing Birds

As I write this, we are still at least 2 weeks from the official start of fall. While I think of that coinciding with fall bird migration, for the birds it's *Zugunruhe* (a German word for migratory restlessness period.) It's their internal cue to go. Last week as I watched the morning local weather, I noticed what meteorologists refer to as *clutter* on the radar. By definition, clutter is unwanted signals in a search radar and can include ground returns, sea returns, buildings, insects

(mayflies or butterflies), smoke, dust, actual weather, and/or birds. We see it as blue or green areas that seem to bloom onto the radar map, rather like big round fireworks. When we see a big one on a nice day, it just might be a flock of birds.

The time of day is important. Many species of birds take off in the evening and land in the morning and they do this in the thousands. It's these large numbers that put them on the radar. When they decide to go can depend on the weather. They will leave ahead of a weather front that is moving in the direction they want to go. Depending on the species, they might fly 30 miles or 200 miles per day. They might make a series of daily flights or fly for days. A blackpoll warbler will travel 1800 miles at one time over open ocean, over a 3-day period without stopping.

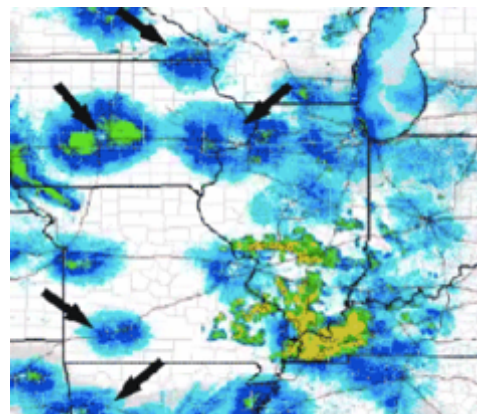
When I first noticed the radar blooms (or plumes as some call them) last week, it seemed likely they were shorebirds. Large numbers of shorebirds have been visiting the lowered Crab Orchard Lake. But this migration actually included songbirds. Migrating warblers were being spotted throughout southernmost IL.

While the roseate spoonbill has become a bit of a phantom of the lake at Crab Orchard NWR, being seen by only the lucky and very early birders, shorebirds, pelicans, and wading birds remain in large numbers and easily viewable from public use areas around the lake. Their ranks are now being joined by warblers and other migratory songbirds. But migrant songbirds can currently be found at many of our parks, forests, and even back yards! All you need to do is to look for them in their fall plumage. Best times are after sunrise between 6:30-9:00 AM.

If you are as interested in tracking migration as I am, lots of great info can be found on the web. A couple good links (with great graphics) are:

<https://birdcast.info>

<https://weather.com/science/weather-explainers/news/2020-05-05-bird-migration-florida-keys-cuba-radar>



This is a weather radar map from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin. (NOAA) displaying migrating bird blooms (at the arrows.)

The last reported Crab Orchard Lake roseate spoonbill sighting came on 09/04. There's lots of habitat, it could still be there.

For 3 days in late August, a male rufous hummingbird visited the hummer feeders at the home of Joy O'Keefe and Mark Vukovich in Union County; a beautiful little wayward traveler.

This week Richard Thomas spotted a her golden-winged warbler on his and Nancy's property in rural Makanda.

Other migrating warblers reported include nearly all we'd expect to see passing through from their northern breeding grounds: black-and-white, magnolia, chestnut-sided, black-throated green, palm, Blackburnian, Tennessee, and bay-breasted.

Rose-breasted grosbeaks are also making stops here on their way south as are Swainson's thrushes.

And keep your eyes on the skies for large mixed flocks of swallows as they gather together (stage) before heading south. Watch for big groups of nighthawks and broad-winged hawks too.

I was thrilled to see 2 red-breasted nuthatches this morning, 09/09. I heard them first, tooting their little tin horns, one of my most favorite bird sounds.

*-Rhonda R.*



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

Individual Member \$15  
Family \$25  
Student Voting Member \$ 5  
Donation \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
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Knock Knock.  
Who's there?  
Tank. Tank Who?  
You're welcome!

Mail to: Southern Illinois Audubon Society  
Attn: Membership  
P.O. Box 222, Carbondale, IL 62903-0222

I/We would like to receive our newsletter via email: YES / NO  
If you receive your newsletter electronically,  
contact Laraine W. or Rhonda R. to check your dues status.



Infected mosquito to bird

Infected bird to mosquito

If you find a recently deceased bird  
(Robins, Bluejays or Crows)  
with their eyes still intact  
DO NOT TOUCH IT!

Environmental Health  
Southern Seven Health Department

REPORT  
DEAD  
BIRDS

HELP US FIND  
WEST NILE VIRUS

618-634-2297, ext. 9114

In Jackson County, if you find a bird eligible for testing, contact the JCHD Environmental Health Division at 684.3143 ext. 128. Other counties, check with your health departments.

30 by 30 Conservation Taskforce Act

In August, Governor Pritzker signed into law Bill HB 3928, creating the Illinois Thirty-by-Thirty Conservation Task Force Act. It will focus on identifying ways in which Illinois can protect 30% of its land and water resources by 2030.

The Act was proposed by a group of Pontiac Township High School students and their teacher. "This initiative has made us realize how much opportunity exists for change and the need to include younger generations," said Pontian students Keagan Hall and Emilie Collins.

Join (or pledge to) the SIAS Bird Blitzers for their IOS Big Sit at Crab Orchard NWR on Sept. 25

Come join Vicki Lang and Rhonda Rothrock for a Big Sit at Bogart Point on Crab Orchard Lake, (CONWR) on Saturday Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>. Vicki and Rhonda plan to be at Bogart from sunrise to sunset in their attempt to identify and count as many bird species as they can from a stationary, 20 foot diameter, area. Folks are welcome to come visit throughout the day to view the amazing pelicans as they soar lazily by OR join in on the count for whatever period of time they choose. Sept. 25 & 26 will be free access days at Crab Orchard NWR. No pass will be necessary to visit.

This is a fundraiser for the Illinois Ornithological Society's (IOS) Grant Program funding state-wide avian studies. SIAS has funded grants supporting studies in southernmost IL through IOS. If you would like to donate, do so at the website link below. Scroll down until you see the SIAS pileated woodpecker logo and click on it. Or just contact Rhonda at woodthrusheola@hotmail.com.

<https://pages.donately.com/illinoisornithologicalsociety/campaign/ios2021-big-sit-fundraiser-08b499539a27>

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

Increasingly Confusing Fall Warblers

Bay-breasted or Blackpoll

Bay-breasted or Blackpoll or Canada or Ovenbird

Duck or Rabbit

Sibley's Impossibility Cube

Radars Classification

